1997

Visualizing Autobiography: Intersections of Gender, Representation, Curriculum Theory.

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VISUALIZING AUTOBIOGRAPHY: INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER, REPRESENTATION, CURRICULUM THEORY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of
Curriculum and Instruction

by
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May, 1997

Acknowledgments

This dissertation represents the final span of a bridge built in my journey from the world of the printing industry to academia. it is impossible to adequately thank all those who have contributed both to that journey and specifically to this dissertation. Many people encouraged and supported my work as a full time graduate student. Not the least of these are my mother, father, brother and sister, who each provided unflagging encouragement through this process.

At the beginning of the journey was Gracie Giles, my supervisor at Byrd Press in Richmond, Virginia, who graciously allowed me to attend classes in the middle of the busy work day. Then, while completing my master's at the University of Wisconsin - Stout, Bill Reynolds's courses introduced me to the complex world of curriculum theory, while Terry Ingram's photography courses deepened my love of photography. Neal and Pat Pritchard, now retired, threw conventional wisdom and gender restrictions to the wind by telling me how a woman could safely camp alone. They made the cold North home to this transplanted Southerner.

During my sojourn at Louisiana State University, the community of graduate students, too many to name individually, provided invaluable help, discussion and encouragement. I found the passion for the academic life within that community.

Support during the dissertation has been overwhelming. Bonnie Noonan read early drafts, and always made me laugh, no matter how dark the moment. Judy Konifoff likewise read drafts, made me

Thanksgiving dinner even though it wasn't Thanksgiving, and shared my biblioholism. Frances Washburne's and Molly Quinn's encouragement and understanding kept my spirits up during the struggles to finish.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Vikki Hillis. After my move to Oklahoma, she did the majority of the footwork required to get the dissertation finished from a distance, several times acting as courier between the American Airlines counter and committee members and the graduate school.

In Oklahoma, Kate Baird also acted as courier to the airport. Pam Bettis read late drafts and cheered me on when I was flagging. David England, chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Oklahoma State University, graciously allowed me all the time needed to finish the dissertation. I can never repay all these people, in both Louisiana and Oklahoma, for making my dissertation possible.

I have left the most important people to last. There in no way to express adequate thanks for the impact my Ph.D. committee members have had on my life. They are more than professors. They have come to be mentors and friends.

I worked for four years with Bill Doll, both as his graduate assistant and student. During that time, he taught me about academia and showed by example what it means to care about students, colleagues and the intellectual life. I will miss working in the wonderful chaos that is his office.

I met Miles Richardson through his highly recommended Ethnography course, a favorite among education students. His poetic

approach to ethnography and life, as well as his patient, non-judgmental approach to teaching, encouraged me to explore photographic ethnography. Wendy Kohli, though not an official member of my committee, provided an atmosphere for open discussion of controversial subjects, as well as positive critiques of my writing and enthusiasm for my ideas. Charles Tedlie served as the graduate school representative on my committee. He took the time to offer excellent comments at both the general exam and dissertation defense.

Last, but not least, are the co-directors of my dissertation -- Petra Munro and Bill Pinar. Petra opened the world of feminist theory to me. She was always enthusiastic when I doubted my work, offering encouragement and suggestions which restored my confidence. She always had the time to listen and read innumerable drafts. Her insights, analysis, and guidance were remarkable. I value her friendship and inspiration.

I came to LSU to study with Bill Pinar. He has long since become a mentor and friend. He influenced my interest in gender construction and autobiography and it was he who first encouraged me to incorporate photography into curriculum theory. His non-directive approach allowed me to grow in ways different from my peers. He provided the space to explore the possibilities of curriculum theory. I am thankful for the serendipity of life's journey which led me from Richmond Virginia, through Wisconsin, to study with him at Louisiana State.

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Abstract

Defined by customs of femininity, women who transcend those definitions find it difficult to represent themselves in a comprehensible manner. The contradictions between the actual activities of life and the demands of femininity require woman to adopt unique approaches to self-representation in order to be accepted. Tied to the biological functions of their bodies through images in the media and social institutions, as well as their internalized images, women often find trying to represent themselves beyond or against their body problematic. The female body is presented as controller of destiny, both through beauty and motherhood requirements. Women often create representations of themselves which fit projected male desire and gaze, rather then their internal beliefs and aspirations, and so become alienated from themselves early in life.

Autobiographical work provides a possibility to move towards overcoming this alienation. Many questions are raised in the process of composing and editing autobiography which reveal different perspectives in one's own life story. What is included, what is left out and how are the decisions are made all affect the final version of the life-story told.

The conflict between what women are taught through cultural practices and their views of themselves pose contradictions, the tensions of which create a space for self-reflective exploration. Autobiographical work provides the possibility of disrupting the male ordered, patriarchal systems of thought, especially in regards to the

ways women think about themselves. Likewise, photography might be used as an alternative approach in autobiography to create self-representational images to counter the images which surround women.

This dissertation examines issues of gender and representation for women. It explores the possibilities of employing other forms of representation, specifically photography, to provide alternative approaches to constructing autobiography. Alternative autobiographic techniques in curriculum theory and teacher education might provide new insights into the lives of women teachers and their relationship to the students they teach.

I / The Bewildered Landscape: Introductions

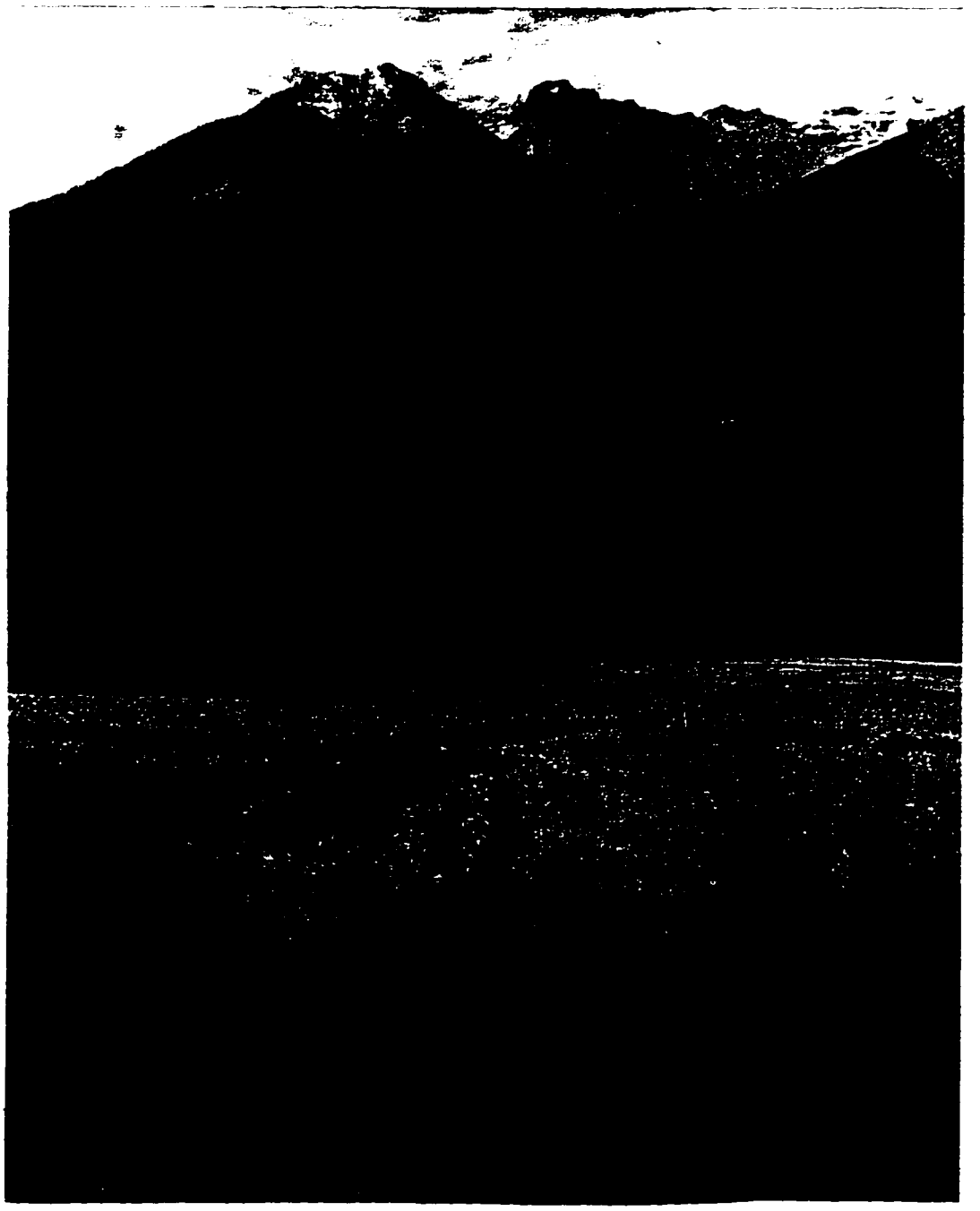

Figure 1.1

IDEAL LANDSCAPE

We had to take the world at it was given:
The nursemaid sitting passive in the park
Was rarely by a changeling prince accosted.
The mornings happened similar and stark
In rooms of selfhood where we woke and lay
Watching today unfold like yesterday.

Our friends were not unearthly beautiful,
Nor spoke with tongues of gold; our lovers blundered
Now and again when most we sought perfection,
Or hid in cupboards when the heavens thundered.
The human rose to haunt us everywhere,
Raw, flawed, and asking more than we could bear.

And always time was rushing like a tram
Through streets of a foreign city, streets we saw
Opening into great and sunny squares
We could not find again, no map could show –
Never those fountains tossed in that same light,
Those gilded trees, those statues green and white.

Adrienne Rich, 1984a*

INTRODUCTION

Reflections: August 1995 - Baton Rouge

Long after completing a personally important autobiographical project, I am still fascinated with the idea of the different perspectives in one's own life story – what is included, what is left out and how the decisions are made. What would happen if an event were examined from different perspectives, through metaphor, or through different modes, such as photography? What different identities would emerge then? How does one cross the dichotomous divide – mind/body, culture/nature, public/private, ultimately masculine/feminine to reach the ecotone[1] (Krall, 1994) beyond, where these combine and recombine? What different views of the complex landscapes of a woman's life could open up through experimenting with alternative approaches to autobiography?

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The Constructed Woman

How do you represent that which is considered in many ways unrepresentable? Woman: she is defined against man, as not-male, as "an empty set" (Lacan, 1975/1982, p. 167). The lives of women have defied representation just as the term "woman" has defied adequate definition. Despite the ambiguity of the definitions of woman and femininity, the conservative atmosphere prevalent in the country today is bringing increasing pressure to bear on women to resume more limited views of femininity. Appearance remains the locus of femininity as women are encouraged to appear more feminine in their

bodies, dress and behavior, even while pursuing individualistic goals traditionally defined as masculine (Bordo, 1993b). Despite decades of feminist work, women who present themselves as assertive and competent are still represented in the media as aberrant and threatening. Exploring constructions of gender and sexuality, and how they are represented, is important if women are to resist dehumanizing patriarchal definitions of themselves.

Autobiography is one mode through which to explore these constructions. Yet autobiographical work is increasingly problematic in what Gail Sheey (1996) describes as "the era of feminist cleansing, of camouflage and pastels" (p. 283). The tools and strategies for self-representation have always been difficult for women to appropriate for their own uses. Indeed, as Audre Lorde (1984) declares, "the tools of the master will never dismantle the master's house" (p. 110). Perhaps it is time to construct different tools.

My interest in autobiographical curriculum theory has focused on the self-representation of gender and sexuality, both my own and other women. How I came to see myself as a woman within the discourses of a Western patriarchal society is increasingly problematic. As I gain more understanding of the patriarchal definitions of femininity, agency and the place of gendered roles within the power structure of the public/private dichotomy, I am aware of the contradictions between the rights, privileges and obligations afforded a person and the requirements of being feminine. Throughout my adult life I have struggled with the difference between what others, often men,

expected of me and what I wanted to be. While the configuration of the places in which these struggles have taken place -- the Industrial/Vocational Education Program as an undergraduate, within a Charismatic Lutheran Church, as a manager in the printing industry, and as a graduate student first in Vocational Education and then Curriculum Theory -- are unique to my life, the struggles themselves are shared with many women.

Social expectations and ideals of femininity and womanhood impact the identity of all women in some way, though the impact varies from woman to woman depending on social class, race, ethnic/cultural origins, *ad infinitum*. Points of tension arise when what a woman needs or wants to accomplish is at odds with the role delineated for her through the discourses of institutions as divergent as the family, media, law, education, or medicine. A woman negotiates her identity in relationship to these discourses which establish the boundaries of what women are and need, what freedoms they may possess, how they will behave, and what they are worth. These discourses impact a woman's physical and psychological dimensions, and the place of family, children, marriage, and relationships with both men and other women in her life. A woman's self-image, and therefore, her self-representation, are filled with these discourses and relationships which combine and recombine through the course of her lifetime. Her identity might best be thought of as fluid, a process rather than a stable entity, which changes as she moves through the landscape of her life.

I am most aware of the vast differences in the constructions of femininity and womanhood when I look at the students I teach. The undergraduate women in Elementary education with whom I work are largely of European decent and come from middleclass families – the same background as mine. They are idealistic about their futures as teachers and the impact they will have on the lives of the students they believe they will teach. Yet beyond this common ground we diverge in our beliefs about what it means to be a woman. The images these young woman hold, both of themselves as women and in the role of teacher, are often stereotypical. In class discussions, many women students state categorically that women make better teachers because they will be or are mothers. Others state categorically that women are more nurturing than men. Some say that sexism no longer exists and do not believe women are limited in American culture. Most believe racism is something only evil people perpetrate. Many have never heard of classism. Their world view includes the desire for justice and equality, yet they remain largely unaware of their own privilege. In many ways, they have accepted the cultural constructions of themselves and others, seemingly without question. It is as if we began our journey in a similar place though different time. Quickly we take different paths through the cultural landscape. The maps we begin with are similar, but the notations and additions added through our experiences and perceptions make them quite different. Though we are all women, each gazes at the world through very different eyes.

The disparity between what women are taught through cultural practices, and their views of themselves pose contradictions, the tensions of which create spaces for the exploration of identities. Finding a different perspective on one's location within and relationship to the patriarchal system may allow spaces for resistance to the restrictions and contradictions in women's identity and self-representation. It is these spaces I wish to locate through different strategies for creating and interpreting self-representations of women.

Women's Representation

What does self-representation come to mean to a woman living in patriarchal systems of thought and language still based in large part on Aristotle's philosophy, (who conceived of woman, as Will Durrant (1926/1933) notes, as "an unfinished man" (p. 94)) and Cartesian dichotomies which view the mind separated from the body? The focus of this dissertation is the rethinking of conceptions of self-representation for women through the use of photography. I am interested in how autobiographical strategies might be used to disrupt the patriarchal systems of thought which stress gender specific roles, take the white middle-class as normative, and construct women as passive caretakers, idealize them in the domestic sphere and privilege public "masculine" activities over domestic endeavors. Photography, used as an alternative autobiographic form, has the potential for the creation of self-representations which are more poetic and metaphoric, providing a different perspective from which to rethink self-representations of gendered identities and experiences. The

creation of visual forms of autobiography have the potential to counter conflicting and destructive images of women (Spence, 1986; Bordo, 1993b) and problematize the cultural notions of femininity through the analysis of the process of creating images and the images themselves. Photographs, while constructed interpretations, nevertheless, provide concrete images that serve as counterpoints to abstract descriptions in written text. They can provide a different language through which to construct self-representation.

Carolyn Heilbrun notes, "When biographers come to write the life of a woman . . . they have had to struggle with the inevitable conflict between the destiny of being unambiguously a woman and the woman subject's palpable desire, or fate, to be something else" (Heilbrun, 1988, p. 21). The lives of women who surpass cultural scripting of what is possible for women to achieve are difficult to represent in a comprehensible manner. This is no less difficult for autobiographers who "have found it no easier to detach themselves from the bonds of womanly attitudes" (Heilbrun, 1988, p. 22). Patricia Spacks, researching the autobiographies of eighteenth-century women, noted that "feminine strength . . . transformed itself mysteriously into one more confession of inadequacy" (Spacks, 1976, p. 59). The contradictions between the actual activities of a woman's life and the cultural expectations of femininity required her to adopt strategies for presenting herself in a believable manner, a situation which continues today (Spacks, 1980). For instance, Spacks found that Golda Meir, prime minister of Israel, consistently down played her importance in the

world events in which she took an active part. In addition Meir often referred to the price she paid for public life in the sacrifice of her domestic life. Thus she presents herself in the autobiography as exhibiting "normal" feminine characteristic of self-effacement despite the power she actually wielded. In addition, domesticity is maintained as the feminine sphere which must be sacrificed for the good of Israel (Spacks, 1980). The implication is that only extraordinary circumstances justify this abnormal sacrifice of traditional feminine roles.

One of the difficulties with self-representation for women is the culture's inability to structure an appropriate characterization of what it means to be a 'woman.' Freud (1933/1949) stated in his lecture on "The psychology of Women:"

> Throughout the ages the problem of woman has puzzled people of every kind. . . . You too will have pondered over this question in so far as you are men; from the women among you that is not to be expected, for you are the riddle yourselves. (p. 145)

Men studying women in the social sciences have been unable to define "woman" without reference to themselves. Thus women becomes a riddle to men, an enigma to be solved.

Unable to deal with the existence of the female in her own right, Freud (1933/1949) theorized "that the little girl is a little man" (p. 151). Lacan (1975/1982) defined woman as "a symptom" (p. 168) of those who are "encumbered with the phallus" (p. 168). In his classic essay on the family and kinship, Levi-Straus (1960) theorized that the basis of culture is the exchange of women by groups of related men. But he presented the roles and actions of men and women as

interchangeable in an effort to assuage the distress of his women readers:

> The female reader, who may be shocked to see womankind treated as a commodity submitted to transactions between male operators, can easily find comfort in the assurance that the rules of the game would remain unchanged should it be decided to consider men as being exchanged by women groups. (p. 284).

Thus, in a single stroke, Levi-Straus dismisses centuries of women's oppression, and, like Freud and others, conflates women's experience with that of men. Patriarchal understanding has been unable to conceive of woman as anything but an "other" to man – an other that can not be made into a man but will not fit in neatly in the assigned place outside of the masculine. In short, in the patriarchal social structure, especially the sciences, women, precisely because they are not men, are bewildering.

Map as Bewilderment

The last definition of the word map in the Oxford English Dictionary (O.E.D.) is a rare and obscure definition: "To bewilder" (O.E.D. 1989, vol. IX, p. 350). This seems an apt viewpoint of the maps of women's lives[2]. The cultural directives which shape the definitions of femininity and the behavior of women are often contradictory. What it means to be a woman involves complex negotiations within the cultural landscape of patriarchy. Linked in metaphor to nature in the culture/nature dichotomy, women's lives become a wilderness: "uncultivated" and so in need of the cultivation, or the culture, of man. More poignantly, wilderness is also "a place in which one is lonely or lost" (O.E.D., vol. XX,

p. 335). Yet a woman's life can also be seen positively as a wilderness, a wilding, wild: "A mingled, confused, or vast assemblage of persons (p. 335)" and "taking or disposed to take one's own way" (p. 331) or "remarkable, unusual, exciting" (p. 332). If wilderness is unmapped and unexplored, this unexplored landscape is a place in which women can begin to traverse and survey that wilderness for themselves. Edward Casey (1993) links the body and place through the process of orientation, of mapping:

> The conjoining of the surface of my body with the surface of the earth or sea -- their common integumentation -- generates the interspace in which I become oriented. Then I am able to find my way about in a placescape that to a significant degree is marked and measured, as well as perceived and remembered, by my actions. (p. 28)

In negotiating her place in the world, the orientations and movements become marked on her body and memory -- but these markings can become cites of resistance as we draw and read our own maps.

By looking at where we have been and how we traversed the terrain of our lives as women, we start to get a sense of our location and position in the community, as opposed to what the society says of our position. Autobiographical work becomes a topographical map of where we have been, providing a compass heading for features in the landscape towards which we might travel. Topographical maps are an especially powerful metaphor for exploring women's lives, because while they show the roads, they also show the features of the terrain beyond the roads, where travel is not controlled by the line of roads. This is analogous to the space in which women live. Women's

lives in patriarchal tradition may be mapped out on traveled roads leading to expected junctions, but the lives women live occupy the off road terrain as well as the defined roads. Like a cross-country hiker who navigates with a compass as well as the map, women venturing off the road may have a more difficult time finding their way, but their journey can run counter to expectations.

Placements

Christopher Tilley (1994) refers to place as "centres of bodily activity, human significance and emotional attachment. . . (whose) meaning . . . is grounded in existential or lived consciousness of it" (p. 15). Place is a human creation whose significance is socially produced, where we exist, both as individuals and part of a group. Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) note, "Place is that which brings the particularistic into focus; a sense of place sharpens our understanding of the individual and the psychic and social forces that direct him or her. . . . Indeed, place particularizes and conveys embedded social forces" (p. 4). The significance of place in the relationships between the social and individual reiterates the way all experience is embodied – effecting and effecting both the body and the mind. Foucault (1983) constructs the subject, the individual, as a discursive effect of the "techniques of power" (p. 212) acting in everyday life.

In many ways, place determines who we are both individually and corporately. Edward Casey (1993) notes that, "where we are – the place we occupy, however briefly – has everything to do with what and who we are (and finally, *that* we are)" (p. xiii, emphasis in original).

We can not exist without a place to exist in. Tilley, examining space as it is made-up of many specific places, notes the meaning of a place "depends on who is experiencing it and how. . . . (E)xperience is not innocent and neutral, but invested with power relating to age, gender, social position and relationships with others" (Tilley, 1994, p. 11). Thus place is a complex, fluid concept whose meaning changes over time, and through different relationships.

Place involves a poetics beyond the facts of geographical location, a poetics which becomes "the revelation or distillation of experience" of "centres of . . . activity, human significance and emotional attachment" which "(have) everything to do with what and who we are" (Tilley, 1994, p. 15). When we seek the poetics of a distinct place rather than the bland objective facts, we are seeking the meaning that the experience of that place has spawned. We are attempting to understand what that place has to say; the stories the people wish to tell through that place.

Place, both psychological and physical, plays an important part in autobiography. The life stories which are recorded are played out against locations situated in time and place. Events change the meaning of a place, translating its name into symbolism. Oklahoma city was only a medium sized western city until extremists bombed the federal building. Now it is a symbol of terrorism and victimization in the United States. Through poetics, autobiography transforms itself from statements of fact about a place into stories of relations and meanings of place, time and events.

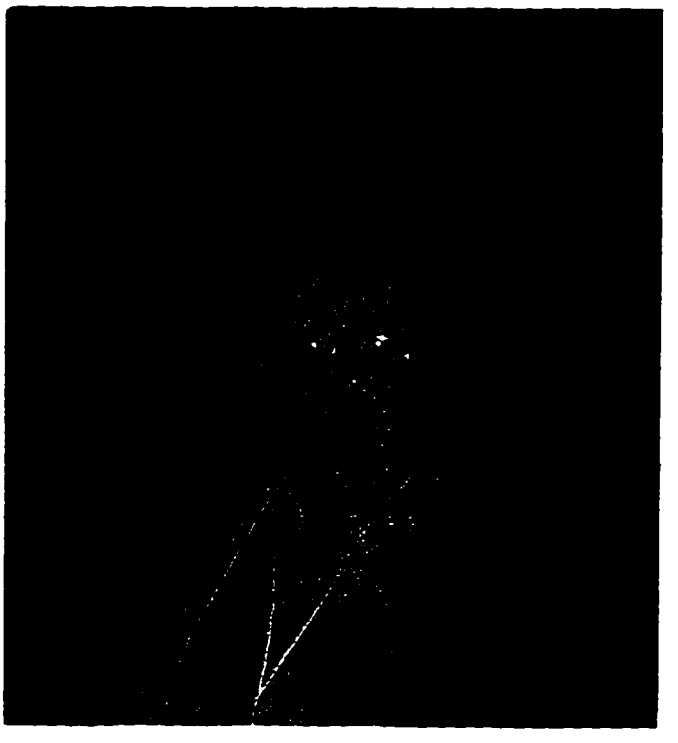

Figure 1.2

March 1990:
LIBERTY
(for Grandma Annie)

When she was born
No statue stood in the harbor of New York
When she died
Liberty was one hundred and two.

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Tangle of Words and Meaning

What is called "autobiography," as Leigh Gilmore (1994a) points out, "is more accurately described as a collection of the discourses and practices individuals have used to represent themselves in relation to cultural modes of truth and identity production" (p. 41). While

autobiography is an extensive and well theorized field of study, I narrow my focus primarily to feminist autobiography and autobiographical curriculum theory. I am interested in the effects of self-reflective writing on the woman engaged in autobiographical work. Before turning to this narrower focus though, I will examine conventional autobiography which forms the heritage from which feminists and curriculum theorists developed their work.

While appearing quite simple and straightforward, it is complex for women to write autobiography. The genre, defined and written by men for centuries, does not easily yield representation for a woman (Heilbrun, 1988; Gilmore, 1994). Even at the level of dictionary definitions, words remain a problem. What is autobiography? What is a woman? In 1975, autobiography was "a biography of a person narrated by himself" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary). By 1980, autobiography had changed to "the story of a person's life, written by that person" but biography remained "the story of a person's life written by someone other than himself" (Oxford American Dictionary) Apparently, autobiography had grown to include all persons, but biographies were still about men's lives. The 1992 *American Heritage Electronic Dictionary* defines autobiography as "the biography of a person written by that person" and biography as "an account of a person's life written . . . by another." Yet before we celebrate this semantic accomplishment, it is important to recognize that this current dictionary, like the others, still defines man as "a human being regardless of sex. . . . a person." I appear to have granted me the

privilege of writing autobiography according to the dictionary definitions. I still do not know if I am a man or a woman.

While this word play may at times seem like an over-simplification of semantic trivia, the masculine gendering of the autobiographical subject remains a problem. Women continue to be unrecognized in the history of autobiography, even as they are reclaiming the agency the autobiographical "I" accords. An example of the continued exclusion of women autobiographers is John Sturrock's 1993 historical and theoretical investigation of autobiography, *The Language of Autobiography: Studies in the First Person Singular,* in which he traces the genre of autobiography from St. Augustine to twentieth-century writers. Of the twenty-two autobiographers he features, only two are women: Teresa of Avila who wrote in the 1560s, and Gertrude Stein's 1933 autobiography. He treats Teresa of Avila with condescension regarding both her spiritual visions and the necessity of self-abnegation about her experiences[3]. Sturrock criticizes Stein for "the plainness of style to which she had descended" (p. 234) in writing *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933/1960). Despite the recuperative work feminist theorists and autobiographers have done since the 1970's, women remain outside the cannon in autobiography (Smith, 1993).

Gendered Autobiography

Autobiography is caught up in the potent male/female dichotomies which are vital to the modernist construction of identity. Leigh Gilmore (1994a) draws on the work of Michel Foucault (1977c,

1978) to analyze the discursive conjunction of power, gender, and identity as defined through autobiography. She notes that self and gender are socially constructed categories which have varied across history. Gilmore (1994a) continues:

> Autobiography has been founded on the principles of identity. . . . To question whether or not there is a self behind the autobiographical representation of self, a gender behind the representation of gender, a genre behind each expression of genre, challenges the founding notion of identity on which autobiography depends. (pp. 18-19)

Conventional or traditional autobiography focuses on a coherent story of a unified, independent, transcendental speaking subject who is able to stand outside of history and experience to tell an essential truth of selfhood as a universal human subject (Smith, 1993). Sidone Smith (1993) notes these autobiographies tell of "public and professional achievements, of individual triumphs in strenuous adventures. . . . the progressive narrative of individual destiny, from origin through environment and education to achievement" (pp. 18-19). The Western conception of self can be traced back through the enlightenment and across the colonized globe (Wagner-Martin, 1994; Gilmore 1994; Smith, 1993). While this modernist conception of self is accessible to white middle class men, those who do not fully control their own destinies – wives and daughters, the working class, the poor, minorities – are not represented by this universal human subject.

As a male defined and oriented genre, autobiography creates problems of gender representation for women autobiographers. As Trin Ninh-ha notes, "Despite our desperate, eternal attempt to

separate, contain, and mend, categories always leak" (quoted in frontispiece of Smith, 1993). A major leak occurs in the category of gender in autobiography. Traditional autobiographic categories of people and definitions of self are unable to accommodate femininity and women. In response, women have had to develop different strategies of representing self ranging from Slave Narratives to novels (Heilbrun, 1988). The recognition of the fluid and multidimensional nature of identity and gender can open spaces for women to examine how they view their own gendered identities.

Writing a Life

As a published literary genre, autobiography has traditionally under represented women (Jelinek, 1980; Gilmore, 1994; Smith, 1987, 1993). Sidone Smith (1987), points out that the difficulties women face may come from a variety of assumptions. 1) it is assumed that men and women experience their relationship to themselves, to society and to language in virtually the same way. 2) Since women's lives are "culturally insignificant" (p. 14), their autobiographies must be insignificant also. 3) Since women's autobiographies describes lives which do not meet the masculine or "androcentric paradigm of selfhood" (p. 14), they are not real autobiographies. Last of all, it may be that autobiography is by its nature, "a male generic contract" (14), imposing the lives of men as representative of the lives of everyone.

What is the value of recuperating autobiography if it is so steeped in masculine traditions and patriarchal constructions? Autobiography is a legitimated genre for self-representational writing. If women wish the

representations of their lives to receive recognition, current conditions require them to write within the field which as it is recognized. Here language itself serves as a delimiting factor. For a piece of self-representational writing to be recognized and dealt with seriously within the male dominated field of autobiographic writing and theory, it is obligated to present itself in a form recognizable as at least a variation of the established forms of autobiography. While it is possible to refuse, the work will then be destined to receive little recognition. In a sense, there is no other game in town. As Adrienne Rich (1984b) succinctly states, "this is the oppressors language, yet I need it to talk to you" (p. 117). Some feminist autobiographic theorists use different terms to forefront the different perspectives and issues of women's autobiographical writing, yet the discourses surrounding the autobiographic genre exert pressure use particular language in presenting and discussing autobiography. For instance, Leigh Gilmore (1994a) uses the term "autobiographics," a term founded in the word "autobiography," to differentiate women's autobiographical writing from that of male autobiographers. Gilmore stresses the process of autobiographic work in dealing with a pluralistic notion of self as opposed to the modernist conception of autobiography as the production of a cohesive, linear narrative about a unified speaking self based on the masculine model. Yet for a woman autobiographer's arguments to be comprehensible, it is necessary for her to draw on the masculine forms which constitute modernist autobiographic theory and history.

Smith (1987) criticizes male historians of autobiography for the definition of the autobiographer which take as "normative" an author's political interests and public involvement, conveyed in the writing, which is then taken to show the life of the period. In traditional, male defined autobiography, life is taken to mean public involvement, not "private" life. Smith takes issue with this normative definition of a life worth recording, based on patriarchal distinctions between public and private lives:

> Patriarchal notions of woman's inherent nature and consequent social role have denied or severely proscribed her access to the public space; and male distrust and consequent repression of female speech have . . . condemned her to public silence. . . . if she presumes to claim a fully human identity by seeking a place in the public arena . . . she transgresses patriarchal definitions of female nature by enacting the scenario of male selfhood. (Smith, 1987, pp. 7-8)

Women autobiographers still face these gendered problems of identity. Women attempting to follow conventional criteria and definitions of autobiography struggle to overcome their own reticence about occurrences and experiences which are defined as either unimportant or only the purview of men. Published women's autobiographies, such as Gertrude Stein's (1933/1960), *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, or Mary Daly's (1992), *Outercourse*, provide models of how to overcome conventional mapping of women's lives. Stein tells her story through the eyes of her partner, fore-fronting their interconnected lives, while Daly disrupts the linearity of events commonly found in autobiography. The silence of women in published autobiography reverberates through the writings of women

who conduct a variety of autobiographical work whether intended for publication or not.

Writing of Selves

Memory of experience is a mediated interpretation. Physical sensations and emotional states are translated into meaningful events, held within the cultural and psychological boundaries of language. Mark Freeman (1993) uses the phrase "rewriting the self" to forefront the textual and interpretive quality of autobiography. Through autobiographical writing, self is continuously recreated through a process "by which one's past and indeed oneself is figured anew through interpretation" (p. 3). Creation of self through interpretation indicates the possibility of alternative or multiple interpretations. We can make different sense of the same events and construct meanings at odds with dominating forces in our lives. Jerome Bruner (1986) notes, "we know the world in different ways, from different stances, and each of the ways . . . produces different . . . representations, or, indeed 'realities'" (p. 109). These representations from alternative perspectives allow critical examination of various issues in our lives and point up options and possibilities for action, especially for women. Even when the possibility of actual change in patriarchal thinking is limited, "the imaginative grounds for such praxis may be constructed in an autobiography" (Gilmore, 1994, p. xii). For instance, the struggle for women's suffrage in the United States spanned several generations of women with each generation presenting themselves as competent to have full citizenship. The small pockets of women working for full

citizenship at the beginning of the struggle reconstituted their views of themselves as women even though in the early years the chance of actual change in the law was limited. The representations they constructed for themselves served as models for an expanding number of women in each generation that followed. Ultimately, the impetus for changing woman's citizenship and place in society was built through these several generations of women's self-representations to the men who controlled the political system.

FEMINIST AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Journal Entry - August, 1996:

When driving through the mountains, one is always confronted with different perspectives of the landscape as mountains rise and recede with the twisting road. it is the same with theories, which provide us with multiple perspectives for thinking about issues important to us; different perspectives emerge in the way we look at ourselves.

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Theoretical Possibilities

Autobiographical reflection can serve to illuminate and critique our life's issues, beliefs and assumptions. Gilmore (1994a) notes that in autobiography there is "a virtuoso display of the complexities and differences within gender, place, time, religious practice, the aesthetic, the family, work, as well as the experiences of class, race, and ethnicity which self-reflective narratives must manage" (p. 82). Autobiographical reflection on social expectations -- social mapping

of a person's roles in life, if you will -- and the lived experience of those expectations, can expose patterns of dissonance between self-image and socially habituated and inscribed views of the person. Autobiography for Gilmore (1994a), exposes "stories within stories we tell and are told about who we are and who we might become. . . . (revealing) the doubled narrative of the feminine, where the story a woman struggles to tell . . . is inscribed with the scripts she receives from her culture" (p. 157). Feminist autobiography attempts to problematize and disrupt the contradictions inscribed in cultural scripts. What a woman can accomplish in her life often lies outside the boundaries of femininity. If she is to see herself as feminine then she is obliged to redefine what femininity is.

Poetics in the Language of Gender

Poetics is an important concept in many of the human sciences, from Anthropology to Women's Studies, in the seach for a language to represent the complex relationships among women, institutions, and their environment. Nancy Miller (1986), discussing poetics of gender in feminist literary theory, notes poetics involves "the . . . interrogation of the powers of the universal as they inhere in all diacritical and interpretive acts, including the workings of grammar itself"(p. xii). A poetics of gender seeks to provide a language to investigate language, and its place in the formation of gendered thought in a society. Society is an interdependent community held together in large part by language. it is always there, whether we live at the periphery or the center the web[4] of language, history and culture.

Poetics reaches beyond the supposed objectivity of scientific language which has plagued the human sciences, especially in its conceptions of gender and identity. Audre Lorde (1985) calls poetry "the revelation or distillation of experience, not sterile . . . wordplay" (Lorde, 1985, p. 126). While poetic language can idealize, it can also express what Adrienne Rich (1984a) refers to as "the human," which is "raw, flawed" and rises "to haunt us everywhere"(13). Poetics speak from and to our experience -- experience that occurs in particular places, at particuaiar times, expressed in particular languages used by particular individuals.

We live in place -- not only in a particular physical location and time, but in a psychologicai place and time, in-iarge-part created out of the tensions between the place defined for us by culture and our own self-definitions. Gender roles and constructions form a large part of this place and time, the geography of life which is related in autobiography. it becomes relevant to examine place, both physical and psychological to understand the power relations playing out in this gendered geography. What Michel Foucault (1980) says of geography is applicable here: "It's up to you, who are directly involved with what goes on in geography, faced with all the conflicts of power which traverse it, to confront them and construct the instruments which will enable you to fight on that terrain" (p. 65). Exploring the geography of our lives can reveal new strategies to employ, the routes to follow, with which to disrupt the power relations which operate in women's lives.

A different language is necessary for this project – a less masculine, more poetic, metaphoric language. Since we are supported in a web of language which forms our concepts including our conceptions of self, discovering new languages is problematic, if not threatening. Mary Daly (1992) describes these problems succinctly in her own process of moving to a less masculine language. She notes, "This process was . . . 'necessary' for me because I was unconsciously afraid of losing my true Self and/or forgetting my intuition of Be-ing, in which I and all Others participate" (p.161). Revising internalized language constructions of identity and gender requires time and new routes to places of thinking about selves and others.

Michel Foucault and Feminist Resistance

Many feminists draw on the work of Michel Foucault to articulate both the power relations involved in the patriarchal domination of women and how resistance is expressed (Bordo, 1993a; Bailey, 1993; Butler, 1990; McNay, 1992; Walkerdine, 1990). Foucault (1977c, 1978) presents a complex explanation of resistance and power in which the roles assigned by society can also form a site of resistance. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) note Foucault's theory of power holds that,

> (P)ower needs resistance as one of its fundamental conditions. It is through the articulation points of resistance that power spreads through the social field. But it is also . . . through resistance that power is disrupted. Resistance is both an element in the functioning of power and a source of its perpetual disorder. (147)

The functioning of power through particular discourses which impinge upon women also creates the points of resistance and disruption of

that power. Through examination of how it was possible for the power relations which exist within the patriarchal order to come into existence, women can deconstruct, disrupt, or co-opt the power operating in their lives.

In feminist autobiography, this resistance to power can take the form of examining the language used in cultural discourses of law, medicine, and religion which closely examine and constrict the activities of women. These discourses construct women as weak, irrational and morally irresponsible. In addition, these discourses speak from the positions of experts and have the power to determine what language can be used in connection to each discourse. Resistance can be expressed through appropriating the definitions assigned to describe women. Thus Patricia Shroeder, rather than apologizing for being a politician while being a mother, incorporates being a mother into her broader identity without it being the center of that identity, stating "I have a brain and a uterus, and I use both" (quoted in Stephens, 1993).

Through different strategies women can begin to define areas of resistance to patriarchal systems of thought. Different strategies are especially useful in creating and expressing different perspectives in autobiography.

ANOTHER APPROACH TO AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Journal Entry - August, 1995

Photography and traveling serve as my gateway to a fictive world in the West--a complex world of beauty, awe, freedom and self

realization undermined at times by destructiveness, fear, isolation and loneliness. A great deal of my photography is bound up with traveling. Each summer I travel alone through the West on a long camping trip. As an Easterner raised among deciduous forests covering long eroded mountains, the vast arid spaces of the west, with a clear view of the structure of the earth, hold me in awe. Photographs become the representation of my relationship to nature as well as self-representation. I use the camera to represent what my mind's eye sees, as opposed to what is actually there -- cropping all aspects of human presence from the shot. My photographs provide images of being alone in the wilderness, reflecting both my self image as a loner and a nature photographer. In fact I am often surrounded by people in a well managed recreation area.

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Why Visualizing Autobiography

I am struck by a comment of Madeleine Grumet (1990):

> Narratives of educational experience challenge their readers and writers to find both individuality and society, being and history and possibility in their texts. It is a brave company of educators who forsake simplistic polarities of individual and society to write, to read and to do scholarly work in these ways. It challenges feminists to encode the body and the idioms of meaningful lived relations without abandoning the disciplines of knowledge. It challenges teachers to listen to stories and to hear their resonance in the distant orchestration of academic knowledge. And it invites all of us, no matter how wide our disillusion, to notice how existence quickens us with joy surpassing despair. (p. 323)

This paragraph encapsulates the reasons for my explorations of the use of autobiography and its importance in one's efforts to

overcome ingrained habits of thinking about one's self and others. I propose to develop photography as an alternative approach to autobiography, especially autobiographical curriculum theory, as a way to reveal and reflect upon ingrained habits of thought surrounding self-representation for women which have unquestioned prejudices, biases, and oppressions imbedded in them.

In autobiographical work we make sense of past experiences through reflection. This involves reconstructing and experiencing the past in the present. Fixing experience as a recorded moment in time is a prime effect of photographs (Sontag, 1977). We return to the photographs to reexperience a time and place with its associated meanings and emotions, and share that experience with others. Photographs represent an event, but also they become representations of aspects ourselves and how we look at the world. Like writing, photography is an editing process. By examining the process of taking photographs and the photographs themselves, we can attempt to find consistency or dissonance between past and present experience and how we interpret those experiences. As Le Guin (1989) notes,

> looked at as a "primary visual (sensory) experience," in isolation, without connection to any context or event, each of our experiences is equally plausible or implausible, authentic or inauthentic, meaningful or absurd. But living creatures go to considerable pains . . . to evade entropy, chaos, and old night. They arrange things. They make sense, literally. (p. 42)

We make sense of experience through the stories we tell, the images we present to ourselves and others around us.

The autobiographical narrative provides a powerful tool for mapping the contextual world we construct in language and which constructs our understanding[5] (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). Many creative forms can serve as rich sources of material for autobiographic expression and interpretation. Photography particularly has a capacity to extend autobiographical understanding because its representation and narrative is through concrete imagery which appears similar to the physical world as our eyes see it. Ursula Le Guin(1989) describes narrative as "an immensely flexible technology, or life strategy, which . . . presents each of us with that most fascinating of all serials" (p. 42), our life stories.

As an autobiographical tool, photography can add depth and richness to our understanding and expression of identity by serving as another language in which to express ourselves. Photography allows for the escape from the pure abstraction of writing by providing concrete visual representations of the physical world, the world of the body. The creation and interpretation of images of our own lives and the lives of others can allow a better understanding of how they see and know the world. Photography can give form to lived experiences which is not limited to dominant conceptions of literacy. it can provide a space to begin reconnecting to the physical.

This reconnection to the physical world is important because the experiences of the body and the physical word, both associated with the feminine, are devalued in modernist thought and philosophy. The mind (the seat of the unified, transcendental self) is separate from, and

more valued than, the body, and, by extension, has the power to control both the body and the physical world. The body and its drives are linked with moral weakness, while the physical world is constructed as chaotic and wasted unless exploited as an economic resource. Both are conceived of as needing control and development in order for civilization to advance. Women, metaphorically linked to both the body and nature, are subject to many of the same conceptions of moral weakness and wild chaos. The need to control the feminine to preserve society remains a subtext in many issues surrounding women today -- issues as diverse as reproductive rights and freedoms to the election of women to political office.

Autobiographical Curriculum Theory

Women's autobiography as a literary genre provides a rich source for models and inspiration of what women can accomplish despite limitations within the cultural definitions of femininity. Published works can provide the seeds of possibilities for other women writers. My immediate interest, though, is in the effects of autobiographical writing on the writer. Rather than approaching autobiography as a literary genre, I follow the use of autobiographical writing as developed by curriculum theorists such as William Pinar (1975, 1988, 1994, Pinar & Reynolds, 1992, Pinar, et. al, 1995), Madeleine Grumet (1988, 1992; Pinar & Grumet, 1976), Florence Krall (1994), Jo Anne Pagano (1990, 1994), Janet Miller (1990) and others (see for instance Graham, 1991; Middleton, 1993; Miller, 1988; Schubert & Ayers, 1992). They turned to autobiography in the process of reconceiving

curriculum, developing "an interest in telling stories of life history in order to reconceive the relation of self to knowing" (Pinar & Reynolds, 1992, p. 2). I focus on the understanding the writer of autobiography explores through the process of writing -- of reconstituting memory and experience into a fixed, edited narrative.

Self-representation and reflection can serve as a means to reappropriate the self, the loss of which, as William Pinar (1975) describes as one of the effects of schooling which creates a form of madness because of the alienation from the life of the self in favor of the dictates social authority. Questioning the power structure of social authority can lay bare the alienation and fragmentation of aspects of self which often lie buried in the construction of dichotomies, such as the split of mind from body or public from private. As we overcome alienation we begin to add our story to the stories of those around us, serving as the catalyst for the emergence of new texts and interpretations. Individual history is a contributing factor to corporate knowledge and understanding, rather than a detriment. As Pinar points out:

> Our life-histories are not liabilities to be exorcised but are the very precondition for knowing. it is our individual and collective stories in which present projects are situated, and it is awareness of these stories which is the lamp illuminating the dark spots. (Pinar, 1988, p. 148)

Problems and issues of the society can be better understood in light of the knowledge and insight gained in autobiography, allowing examination of how traditions operate so alternatives may present themselves.

Autobiography has long been recognized as a major area of research in curriculum theory as well as feminism. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (1995) identify three major streams of autobiography within curriculum theory. The first stream they identified as "autobiographical theory and practice" which includes "*currere*, collaboration, voice, dialogue journals, place, poststructuralist portraits of self and experience, and myth, dreams, and the imagination" (Pinar, et al., 1995, p. 516). The second stream they identified as "feminist autobiography" which includes the concepts of "community, middle passage, and the reclaiming of self" (p. 516). The third stream they characterized as "those efforts to understand teachers biographically and autobiographically," and includes "collaborative biography and autobiographical praxis, the 'personal practical knowledge' of teachers, 'teacher lore', and biographical studies of teachers' lives" (pp. 516-517). My work draws from autobiographical theory and practice and from the feminist curriculum theorists.

I am influenced by a number of different theorists in both the autobiographical theory and practice stream and the feminist stream of autobiography. I am especially influenced by Pinar and Grumet's (1976; Grumet, 1988; Pinar 1994a, b) development of *currere* which has its roots in psychoanalytic theory. The autobiographical method of *currere* explores the past and its effects on the present and future, analyzes experience in the context of the culture and then synthesizes autobiographical reflection into a holistic view of the person. The method of *currere* integrates the experiences of the body rather than

separating the mind and body (as the mind/body dichotomy dictates), providing a useful approach to the complex issues women face.

Feminist curriculum theorists are particularly concerned with the alienation of the private from the public sphere, which serves to fragment girls and women from the experiences of their domestic lives. Advocating the reincorporation of the experiences of home into curriculum, Grumet (1991) notes the importance of connecting curriculum to everyday life: "the choosing and naming of what matters and the presentation of those values for the perception and engaged participation of others are the deliberations which constitute curriculum development. And we learn how to do it – or not to do it – at home. . . . Nevertheless, you will not find our homes . . . or our parents . . . cited frequently in our papers as sources of what we know" (p. 75). Often the knowledge gained through life experiences is subjective, implicit and anecdotal – forms of knowledge which are devalued in the scientific objectification of knowledge. Janet Miller (1990, 1992) and Jo Anne Pagano (1990) explore the use of individual experience and stories in creating community and interconnection between teachers. The valuing of experience and the communicating of knowledge through story serves to validate teacher's experiences, both in the classroom and outside of it, as a source of knowledge about education and the process of learning and teaching. The relationships established through the sharing of experience act as a counter force to the isolation under which classroom teachers operate.

Another influential area of feminist autobiographical and curricuium theory is Life History Research. Feminists working in this area of research are applying theories of postmodernism and the deconstruction of the notion of a unitary self, to open the flood gates of possible selves. Life History research explores the relation of culture and the people who create it. Petra Munro (1990) notes, "Life history studies provide an opportunity not oniy to explore the effects of social structures on people but to portray the ways in which people themselves create culture" (p. 165). Leslie Bloom and Petra Munro's (1995) separate research on the lives of women school administrators reveals the different strategies women employ to deal with a variety of roles and subject positions and conflicting expectations. The non-unitary construction of the self creates the dilemma of "multiple 'I's" (Munro, 1995) in which different, even conflicting, conceptions of who we are can be held at different times. Plural identities require incorporation into a somewhat coherent though fluid subjectivity which can be recognized as a particular woman. What at any given moment may appear as a stable, unified self is revealed in autobiography as a multifaceted and confusing self.

Maxine Greene (1995) calls for the releasing of the imagination through the in-depth incorporation of the arts into educational experience to bring about awareness of the need for social change. The arts in their myriad forms – music, literature, sculpture – can raise awareness of emotional and aesthetic connections between people. Imagination and creativity are not oniy needed for meaningful social

change. Greene (1995) argues they are necessary for personal change. I am interested in the incorporation of creative images into autobiography to provide perspectives on patterns of self-image and representations a woman presents to the world. In addition, I am interested in exploring the process of creating these images to understand how and why particular perspectives are important while others are not. A better understanding of the perspectives one constructs may open the possibility of approaching the world and ones capacity for social action differently.

Sue Middleton (1993) and Valerie Walkerdine (1990) both incorporate visual imagery into autobiographical work of teachers in the form of drawings done by the subject as a child and photographs taken of the subject as a child. These images are then revisited by the adult autobiographer and new insights gained through the new interpretations which can be assigned based on the experiences and insights developed as an adult. Visual forms can help stimulate both the imagination and memory to allow the events and experiences of a life to be reconstituted in the present.

Views Through the Lens

Photography is not normally thought of in terms of its autobiographical implications, yet photographs – the choice of subjects, location, framing, exposure, techniques – can reveal much about the photographer's sense of self and place in society. Photography provides a connection to place. It represents the world through a visual medium rather than a linguistic medium. The view

through the lens is radically different from the view our eyes see of the world. The view is miniaturized; two dimensional rather than three dimensional because of the single lens; the horizon and periphery are cropped by the field of view. Indeed, photographs serve to freeze time itself, and so change how we interact with the medium of time and memory. The altered view provided in photographs can create a space to explore our perceptions[6].

A photograph reveals aspects about place and relationships which are obscured in narrative accounts. What Rich (1993) says of poetry is also true of photography:

> A poem can't free us from the struggle for existence, but it can uncover desires and appetites buried under the accumulating emergencies of our lives, the fabricated wants and needs we have urged on us. . . . (Poetry is) an instrument for embodied experience. But we seek that experience, or recognize it when it is offered to us, because it reminds us in some way of our need. (p.13)

Photography records a representation of a place, a view, an angle, a perspective. It also records our constructions and desired views of particular places, which also reflects particular aspects of ourselves -- our beliefs, our relationships, our desires, how we are situated in our environment, and our attitudes towards that environment.

Photographic Language

As a creative act, photography, just as music, dance, or other visual arts, provides a way to express facets of identities which otherwise remain obscured in forms of expression involving words

alone. Free of the constraints of words, though not free of social construction, photography can provide a visual language, an alternative means of expression which might be used to expose or escape the alienating dichotomies which split the continuity of lived experience. Visual imagery can allow the development of alternative metaphors and meanings.

This is not to say that photography in our society is politically neutral or intrinsically liberatory. From its earliest development photography has been used by the state for the analysis[7] and control of deviant or unlawful behavior through the photographing of suspects and prisoners (Benjamin, 1980; Sekula, 1986). As soon as mass production of images became feasible in the 1850s, the medium was used for the pornographic exploitation of women (Solomon-Godeau, 1986). But the camera, like the printing press, is a tool which may be used and appropriated to serve the needs of groups and individuals in unpredictable ways.

As Fred Ritchin (1990) notes, photographs invite closer examination of the "realities surrounding and permeating us" because "the photograph often asserts that much more is going on than we might otherwise have thought" (p. 143). Photographs are composed to show particular relationships of people or objects, and capture the non-verbal language of the subjects as well as the stance of the photographer towards the subject. These different views expose the multiplicity of experience making up a person's views of the world. Two photographs, whether of the same mountain or the same child, tell

different stories, allow different interpretations, each influenced by particular psychological, historical and cultural constraints.

Photographic Journeys

Photographs are a record of the journey we are making through life, both figuratively and literally. Many amateur photographers I meet use photographs to record themselves experiencing the national park, they photograph themselves and their companions, often children in the scene. Once I watched a father pose his family twenty or thirty feet in front of a grazing elk herd. It seemed the photo served as concrete proof of the experience. My own photographs of the same elk herd shows no indication of the presence of a road or people. The differences in two photographs of almost identical scenes provide insights into each of our orientations to the subject and the environment around us. My own orientation is toward the elk and the image of a natural, human-free environment, which also points to my self-image as a loner. The family's process of taking their photograph reminds me of my own tendency to take a limited number of photographs of people, including friends and families. The juxtaposition of the framing of the two photographs brings to the fore my own complicity in my sense of isolation created through my orientation away from other people.

Each of these two photo-opportunities situates the photographer differently, and provides an indication of the photographer's positioning. In this sense, photographs provide a mapping of place and the relation to place of the photographer.

CONCLUSION

Autobiographical Recursions:

I undertook an autobiographical project in the spring of 1993. I call it an autobiographical project rather than an autobiography because it was the process of exploring my memories and creating a narrative which interested me more than the end product. It was the beginning of my experimentation with self-representation and different autobiographic forms. Those interests eventually grew into the themes of this dissertation. I struggle with identity, the concept of a pluralistic self, and how sexuality and gender are constructed in my own life and the lives of people around me. It is these ideas which I attempt to confront in this dissertation.

Over the last few years I have grown more post-modern in my beliefs. I no longer believe in a unified, essential self, nor in the modernist meta-narratives which construct identity, gender and sexuality as fixed and absolute, based on a male heterosexual norm. Yet despite these beliefs, I have found it incredibly difficult to avoid falling back into modernist thinking and language. Words such as explore, reveal, experiment, understand, and a plethora of "shoulds" and "musts", haunt my writing. I have tried to limit my use of modernist, masculinist language. But the thinking of a lifetime and the language it is done in, does not change over-night.

In each chapter I will be illustrating my use of photography in autobiography with photographs and autobiographical pieces. The autobiographical pieces will either be in the form of Journal entries,

which generally are dated, or reflections. These reflections are taken from previous autobiographical pieces I have written over the course of my experimentation with autobiography. In the conclusion of each chapter, I will reflect on the photographs and autobiographical entries in what I refer to as "Autobiographical Recursions." I take the word recursions from Dr. William E. Doll's (1990) use of the word as "a reflective looking back on where we have been and what we have done" (p. 101). Through the recursion in each chapter I hope to "revisit with more insight and depth" (p. 102), the experiences and insights I have had in my life.

One experience I seek out, again and again, is the mountains. I try to go into the mountains -- the Rockies, or the Appalachians -- each year, for a time of renewal. When I am in the wilderness I feel swallowed up by the expanse. Cityscapes and human creations and constructions can not affect me in this way. The force, weight of the mountains causes me to weep for the beauty. Perhaps it is my stifled soul's expression of life. It is this awesome grandeur i seek to recreate in nature photographs. i want to show the power which lies beyond, outside myself, unaware of the daily griefs of the life of minor latecomer to the planet.

I contrast my idea of an "ideal landscape," a Canadian mountain valley (Figure 1.1) with Addrienne Rich's poem "An Ideal Landscape." Rather than focusing on a grand, awe inspiring landscape, she focuses on the human scale with its imperfections which remain despite efforts to find the "ideal." In many ways, I try to flee from the pain of the

human experience into what I perceive as the perfection and peace of nature. I try to see my self, and represent myself, as being in control of my roles and destinies. In fact, we control only some of our lives – perhaps less than I wish to admit. We are subject to the social world around us, with its variety of personalities and social conventions. Our identities and position in the world takes place in the swirling social mix around us.

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In the remaining chapters I explore the positioning of women in systems of thought which construct women and the feminine in such contradictory ways that women become misrepresented or seem unrepresentable. I explore the possibilities for a visual medium, such as photography, to provide an alternative strategy for women to gain a different perspective of themselves, their situations and situatedness in the world.

In chapter two, I examine the functioning of traditional masculinist autobiography which posits a unitary, coherent self representing human kind. Evolved out of the European enlightenment, this view of the self is based on white European men and serves as a patriarchal and modernist master narrative (Smith, 1993). Yet women (and men, for that matter) do not fit neatly into any category. Gender intersects with all aspects of a person, including, but not limited to, race, class, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, age, abilities or, conversely, disabilities, religion, education – the list is infinite.

In chapter three, I examine the effect of the Cartesian mind/body split which follows the male/female dichotomy, positing men as mind and women as body. I continue this exploration in chapter four through connections of the culture/nature dichotomy to the mind/body split. I propose that the mind/body dichotomy and subsequently the nature/culture division, are two of the most damaging dichotomies for women as individuals. These dichotomies especially lead to an alienation from self and limit women to the biological functioning of their reproductive system. These dichotomies differentiate ways of knowing into male and female. Sidone Smith (1993) examines the development of this view of knowledge in the nineteenth-century, views which continue today. Smith notes:

> such differentiation of man's and woman's ways of knowing reinforced an already effective hierarchy that privileged the masculine mode as more radically severed from nature and thus the more perfect human achievement. Woman's mode, conceived of as more natural and less fully human and mature . . . disqualifies her for public life and the arena of public discourse. (p.15)

In chapters three and four, I explore the trails of the mind/body split as they intersect with psyche, gender construction and sexuality. I am interested in how the fragmentation brought about by dichotomies creates and controls gendered spaces and landscapes in women's lives and their modernist representations.

In chapter five, I propose the use of photography as an alternative approach to autobiography, drawing on my own photographic work. I contrast this with the work of professional photographers Margaret Bourke-White, Jo Spence, and Jim Hubbard,

examining how their beliefs and views about self-representation is reflected in their work. Throughout the chapter I examine the possible use of photography by women in exploring the gendered world. I propose that one way of approaching autobiography in the face of the multitude of selves is as an ethnography of selves. This approach changes the orientation of autobiography and allows for different views of the person in the world. Photography might serve as a way to reintegrate the dichotomous splits by providing different modes of seeing and constructing knowledge. I apply these notions of vision and knowledge construction in chapter six where I explore the uses of photography in autobiographic and feminist curriculum theory and practice.

NOTES

1 Florence Krall (1994) uses the term ecotone, which she defines on the cover of the book as the, "the boundary between two natural communities where elements of both as well as transitional species intermingle with heightened richness," as the metaphor for the boundaries and transitional spaces in one's life.

2 Map and mapping metaphors have been widely used by many feminists (see for example, Gilmore 1994; Rich, 1986b; Ettinger 1994). Gilmore (1994) discussing the difficulties she faced locating women's autobiography, described the method of finding women's autobiography as "a map for getting lost" (p. 3).

3 Sidone Smith (1993) points out the dangers under which women such as Teresa of Avila wrote. Commanded to write confessions of their religious experiences, including visions, these women risked death as heretics if their confessors found reason to believe their visions were received from the devil rather than God, or were in some other way deceitful or false. The confessors were bound by the contradictions of the Church teachings which held that men and women were equal before God, but also that humans were expelled from Eden because of the devious words of Eve, the precursor of all women.

4 Here I follow Clifford Geertz's development of the idea of Max Weber's that "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). Geertz defines culture as these webs. Cultural analysis then becomes "not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (p. 5).

5 Bowers and Flinders (1990) examine the metaphorical nature of language of cultures and sub-cultures which " provides the shared set of preunderstandings that will guide the interpretations the individual makes of new experiences; for the most part these preunderstandings will not be part of what the individual is explicitly aware of" (p. 32). The context of our understanding is predetermined by cultural metaphors in the language we use. We as a culture construct the language but also our understandings are constructed by that same language.

6 Photographs alter perceptions of the physical world in ways which have come to be accepted. When photography and photographs first became commercially available to the public, the way people perceived the world was altered. The camera and photographs, as Berger (1977) notes,

> showed that the notion of time passing was inseparable from the experience of the visual (except in paintings). What you saw depended upon where you were when. What you saw was relative to your position in time and space. It was no longer possible to imagine everything converging on the human eye as on the vanishing point of infinity. (p. 18)

in a sense, the loss of this particular perspectives, humans at the center with the world stretching out from their center was a harbinger of other changes to come. Eventually even the Western patriarchal view of the world as a resource to be exploited for the benefit of Europe and North American powers came to be challenged. In this disruption, feminism has been able to offer critique of these systems and how they operate.

7 Physiognomy and phrenology, which sought to identify people inclined toward immorality and criminality through the examination of the shape of the head and facial features, intersected with photography in the 1840's. For example, Eliza Farnham, a prison reformist and the matron at Sing Sing prison, commissioned photographer Matthew Brady to do portraits of ten adult prisoners, selected to illustrate the application of phrenology. Not coincidentally, seven of the ten prisoners were from "racially inferior" groups -- Jewish, African-American, Irish, and German. She published the results of her study in a book on "criminal jurisprudence" (Sekula, 1986).

II / A Collared Elk: Autobiography and Women's Self-representation

Figure 2.1

Journal: May 19th, 1995 - Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado

Photos and journals can not express the body's experience of these mountains -- the almost continuous sound of wind in the distance, the subliminal anxiety of suffocation brought on by reduced oxygen at this altitude, the low humidity and daily snow flurries, the breeze on the hair of my arm and the bitter cold wind, the scent of cinnamon from the Ponderosa Pines. I'm thirsty more than usual and hungry in odd ways.

At night in the tent its so cold, I sleep with a knit cap on and the dog in the bag to keep her warm. I write and read by lantern and sip

hot cocoa in hopes I'll be warm enough to sleep. I'm sitting cross legged with this pad on my lap to write. My rump is cold. I'm trying to think about self and gender, photography and travel, and Petra Munro's paper.

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INTRODUCTION

Serendipitous Representations

Through this journal entry and photograph, I began an essay exploring alternative forms of autobiographical writing involving the uses of photographs to create metaphorical images of ideas and emotions expressed in the text . Through serendipitous circumstances, that essay also became the source of extensive questioning of what self-representation means for women and who controls the forms self-representation may take. This chapter examines self-representation of women and the need for different strategies to dislodge ingrained, often taken for granted, beliefs about what it means to be a woman in our society. I propose an ethnographic and poetic approach to autobiographic work, with the incorporation of visual components, to better approach the complex way issues of truth and privilege inscribe themselves in the power relations of self-representation.

Autobiography traces its genealogy back to the fourth century, as John Sturrock (1993) declares: "True narrative autobiography begins with the *Confessions* of Augustine" (p. 20). These roots in the confession of a conversion experience remain to influence the character of twentieth century women's autobiographies (Gilmore,

1994b). Autobiography's link to religious language and truth construction, which structures women as deceitful because of Eve's transgression through language, established the masculine construction of autobiography (Smith, 1987, 1993; Gilmore, 1994a, 1994b). Conversion experiences began as the purview of religious men. With the appearance of women mystics, the male domain of both conversion experience and the authorization of who could speak the truth was challenged. To contain this challenge, the church established elaborate guidelines and codes regarding the writing of women's confessions and the judgment of their truthfulness by male confessors.

Drawing on Michel Foucault, Gilmore (1994b) shows how the construction of truth within the confession of a woman such as Julian of Norwich was an interactive process between the female penitent and the male confessors. The woman had to express her experience in the language of the confessors who would judge her as either a truthful Christian or a deceitful heretic. Gilmore (1994b) notes, "The discipline of confession compels the penitent to speak in her/his own voice an appropriate language in order to save her/his soul. . . . Thus the notion of some self-determination within that structure prompted allegiance to the confessors and the authority they represented" (p. 58). In order to present her experience as truthful and worthy of being made public, a woman was required to represent herself through the masculine legal language of confession; otherwise she would be silenced. Though a woman, she had to code herself and her

experience as masculine in order to represent it in the language of confession.

While the specific links to religion have been left behind, the roots of the story of individual's conversion through experience remain a paradigmatic story line in autobiography. The masculine construction of self and language within autobiography also remained (Gilmore, 1994b), as does the masculine model of a unified self and story, as Sturrock (1993) declares, "whoever narrates his or her life is willing its transformation . . . into a thought whole" (p.20). Sturrock still proposes Augustine work as an ideal, stating "that, by the extraordinary coherence of its structure, his may serve the paradigm of all autobiographical stories" (p. 20).

The usual masculine forms of autobiography posit a unified self which incorporates power and knowledge in particular ways. This conception of an essential self, considered able to take an objective stance unaffected by the implications of its own culture, draws on universalized truth to form judgments about the world and others different from itself. Sidone Smith (1993) provides insight into the consolidation of this form of self, which is constructed as independent of and existing outside of language. Language is perceived as "transparent and mimetic" creating a "correspondence between words and world" (p. 17). Such a self, Smith continues,

> names, configures and controls a world, which in turn assures the self of its epistemological probity. The life of the self becomes one such instantly accessible world, accessible to representation . . . naming, forming, and controlling interpretation. Thus life can be represented, and that representation, like the self controlling it, is

> coherent, unified, univocal. . . . Both self and representation are as bold, indivisible, and unitary as the 'I' that marks the space of selfhood on the page of autobiography. (p. 17)

Representable in the singular 'I', the individual is able to operate independent of others as it strives to achieve its destiny, a destiny which it both chooses and controls. The self thus constructed is the modern Western ideal of the autonomous individual.

Emerging out of the Renaissance and consolidating its position through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Smith, 1993), the individualistic self attained the status of a master narrative in Western thought. This powerful discourse defines "centers, margins, boundaries, and grounds of action" (p.18). Women and many other groups did not meet, and were not sanctioned to meet, the criteria of an independent individual and were relegated to the margins of the discourse of the universal self. While the master narrative of the self constructed a powerful, racially European, and gendered masculine formation of autobiography, women and others excluded by the master narrative began to write their own versions of autobiographies from the margins. Diaries, Confessions, Slave narratives and other forms appeared to narrate different, multivoiced selves (Smith, 1993).

Today poststructuralist and postmodern feminist theorizing of non-unitary, socially constructed subject positions seeks to disrupt the modernist view of a unified self (Bloom & Munro, 1995). As the concept of self is problematized, the subject of autobiography is also problematized or may seem to disappear all together (Smith 1993; Foucault, 1977a, 1983b). In its place concepts of a pluralistic self has

arisen. Contingent rather than universal in nature, this poststructuralist construction of subjectivity, as Chris Weedon (1987) notes, "is precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak" (p. 33).

The deconstruction of self and subject impact the way women can construct autobiography by making the traditional question of 'who am i' not only seems unanswerable; it may be impossible to ask. Perhaps, we could begin by asking different questions. instead of examining "why am i the way i am?," which can lead to the self-policing action of normative discourse, perhaps we could take a different tact. It might be more illuminating to ask, "how has the particular situation of my life come about and what made possible the form my life has taken?" Another question might be, "what situations created my particular, complex formation of gendered embodied selves?" An even more basic and startling question might be "whose am i?" These types of questions attempt to disrupt the assumptions surrounding a unified and individualistic self.

POWER, FEMINISM AND REPRESENTATION

Foucault and Feminist Critique

Michel Foucault's (1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1978, 1983b) work provides strategies with which to explore questions of identity and the complex relationships of power, gender and representation. Foucault shows the humanist development of a unified, monolithic self to be just that: a development which renders invisible its own process of construction. in its place he theorizes a discursive production of

subjects in the fields of power which create and are created through the interconnections of discourses. Rather than a top-down hierarchy, he shows power to be in free floating circulation, not attached exclusively to particular institutions or discourses (Foucault, 1978). Institutions and their discursive practices seek to produce subjects through the creation of docile bodies which "may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved" (Foucault, 1977c, p. 136). These docile bodies may then efficiently be inserted into the place of most utility (from the institutions point of view). The power of discourses to form docile bodies is not total though. Resistance can arise in response to the pressures of discursive formations. Just as power is free circulating and multifaceted, resistance is variable and infinite in its forms. Foucault (1978) describes this variety of possible resistances as "resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations" (p. 96). In providing a perspective different from a rigid top-down hierarchy of oppressors and victims, Foucault opens a space in which discourses which produce and control "truth" can be analyzed and altered.

These theories have provided women an insight into their situations in the power system. Many feminists (Sawicki, 1991; Butler 1990, 1993; Fuss, 1989; Gilmore, 1994a, 1994b; Bordo, 1989, 1993b; Sedgwick, 1985, 1990) have used Foucault's work to critique the

construction of gender, sexuality, and femininity through power relations in our society. His work directly impacts understandings of gender as constructed through discourse, which implicitly affects self-representation and understanding for women. Jana Sawicki notes, Foucault "attempts to liberate us from the oppressive affects of prevailing modes of self-understanding inherited through the humanist tradition" (pp. 26-27). Foucault deconstructs the humanist subject as exterior to and an initiator of power. Rather, Foucault places the subject within the field of circulating power, describing the subject as integral to power and as an affect of discursive practices (Foucault, 1977c, 1978; Gilmore, 1994a, 1994b; Sawicki, 1991).

One area of Foucault's research which is especially useful is his genealogical studies of the disciplining of the body. The body forms the major social construction of women's identity and oppression. The body is the site invested with gender difference, and therefore the power relations structured by gender difference through which women are regulated. Because of this contradiction between identity (defined in masculine terms of self-determinacy) and control (defined in terms of destiny), women's relationship to their bodies can become ambiguous. Sexuality, and by extension the entire gender system, as Foucault (1978) notes, "is an especially dense transfer point for relations of power" (p. 103). Judith Butler (1990) and Valerie Walkerdine (1990) both use Foucauldian analysis to explore how gender is performative and fictionalized, imposed and internalized through social discourses. Power resides and acts in relations between

discourses, and in the process produces different subjectivities which constitute the individual. While Foucault himself does not examine how gender affects the disciplining of bodies, Bloom and Munro (1995) comment, "Foucault's claim that the body is the subject and object for discipline can be extended to make the claim that the female body is the subject and object for discipline for male bodies" (p. 108). It is in this area that Foucault's own genealogical methods can be turned back against itself to examine how gender further complicates the functioning and circulation of power.

Constructing and Deconstructing Images of the Body

Women's construction of body image is an example of the way power inscribes the body as shown in Foucault's development of power and discursive relationships. Drawing on Foucault and others, Susan Bordo (1993a, 1993b) analyzes the role of image in the construction of women's individual views of reality. Construction of notions of femininity couched in terms of freedom and personal choice successfully conceal powerful discourses in which the female body is a "socially shaped and historically 'colonized' territory" (1993a, p.188). Thus, choosing breast implants are defended as taking control of one's body through free choice, without examining the inscription of masculine heterosexual desire and gaze in women's conceptions of their own beauty. While it is necessary for women to reappropriate the right to control their bodies, how that freedom of choice operates takes place within a social milieu which fetishizes and objectifies women's body.

Bordo calls for a more critical reading of images, especially in the media, which, for example, present resistance (in a Foucauldian sense) and power as obtainable with the idealized slender, long-limbed, athletic young woman who resists domination through expression of her own choices about her body. Not coincidentally, the choices visually presented by the media are often limited to the extremes of body type and lifestyle which women outside the fields of acting or modeling are unable to purchase (Bordo, 1993a). Bordo points to the contradictions and dangers of Foucault's particular constructions of resistance, especially of complicity as a form of resistance. In a postmodern age in which image has been conflated with reality, to treat complicity with patriarchal images of femininity as a form of resistance abandons women to a masculine imagistic construction of the reality of their bodies in the name of choice.

In her analysis of anorexia, Bordo (1993a) notes that the eating behavior and the desired body type of anorexic young women matches the idealized construction of femininity -- emotionally self-denying and self controlling while creating a physically slender, young body. Yet, these young women experience themselves as powerful, independent, resisting the control of others (Bordo, 1993b). Coincidentally, this describes the idealized masculine image of the independent American spirit.

Psychology's Normative Discourse

In linking Foucauldian analysis of gender construction to eating disorders such as anorexia, Bordo illuminates the strength of normative

discourses which define how women are to present them selves to others and to themselves. One of these normative discourses is psychoanalysis. Freud theories of childhood sexuality and fantasy serves as a good example. Judith Herman (1981) relates how Freud found case after case of childhood sexual abuse in women. At first he accepted these accounts and saw their connection to the psychoiogicai trauma the women exhibited. But eventuaiiy he was unable to accept what this implied about that the patriarchal family -- that it is destructive to daughters. He changed his theories to reflect social constructions of the family . His new theory theorized that girls fantasize sexual abuse. This also reinforced another patriarchal myth, that women (and children) are unreliable because, consciously or unconsciously, they are deceptive.

Through continual self-examination with an expert who supposedly can more properly interpret our motives than we ourselves, psychology and psychiatry serve powerful discursive functions, determining what is normal and deviant and dictating appropriate behaviors and treatments for the individual. Many of these psychiatric normalizing models have crept into everyday attitudes through the media and public institutions such as religion and education. A cursory inspection of the self-help and education sections of popular bookstores indicates the level of interest in normalized psychological development.

Through self reflection it is possible to police one's own desires, thoughts and actions in an attempt to conform to what is declared

"normal," by-passing the psychological expert. This process can be difficult on women, who are traditionally positioned as requiring help in seeing "reality," the "truth" of their femaleness (Bordo, 1993b; Gilmore, 1994a; Cixous, 1991). It is not truth and reality with which women need help. On closer examination, women have difficulties accommodating patriarchal views of women and femininity (Felman, 1991), the 'truth' and 'reality' of which conflicts with the lived experiences of women.

It is important to examine the intersection of what we believe to be our own individualistic views of our world and the views society has of us. The two constructions are intermeshed to such an extent that the individual as defined by the humanist tradition indeed does not exist. A person constructs a self image based on social image; social image changes within discursive relationships between people and society. For women, self-representation, both physical representations of appearance, speech and gesture, as well as autobiographic creation through writing and visual imagery, reflects the intersections of social discourses on femininity with lived experience.

SELF-REPRESENTATION FOR WOMEN

Searching for Autobiographic Form

How is a woman to represent her life? How should I begin? Could I begin with the nineteenth-century photograph of my great, great grand parents in order to give myself a foundation? What connections are most important, which side of the family, which of my relatives? I could begin with my grandmother (Figure 1.2) and the short poem I wrote after her death. I could be conventional, and start with my

childhood and look only at the events of my life -- my parents, life growing up in the military, school experience, perhaps expanding to compare parallels between my parents' experience and my own. All of this is fits conventions of autobiographic form. But these forms mask the potential of autobiography to be used as a strategy to approach issues created in the social construction of feminine identity.

The larger or more important questions are what forms constitute representation. In the attempt to represent themselves, to find voice, women are adopting different strategies of autobiography. Traditionally separated genres of fiction, biography, autobiography and history are being merged to produce writing which crosses traditional genre boundaries to allow a more in-depth understanding of the lives of women. In the process, definitions of knowledge and truth are challenged. Iles (1992) notes:

> (T)he separate analytic traditions accrued by different kinds of knowledge do not have either to exclude or subordinate each other in order to coexist; taken together in practice they may indeed support each other to create quite special kinds of insight. (p. 8)

Refusing constraints, such as focusing only on masculinist conceptions the importance of activity in the public sphere, allows the construction of autobiography to begin to challenge assumptions about what it means to be a woman, what constitutes fiction or truth about a life, and how gender-stratified activities in public and private spaces are represented.

Approaching autobiographic work through non-traditional means allows the poetic voice to come to the fore. Many poets such as Linda

McCarriston (1991), Lucille Clifton (1987) and Adrienne Rich (1984b) (see also Moyers, 1995) represent and explore experiences, events, and family connections through metaphoric imagery. I wish to explore the possibility of creating metaphors of identity, experience, and connections through photography, representing myself not through family photographs but through photographs I have taken. I wish examine the way metaphors constitute particular modes of thinking about myself, and how they are influenced by patriarchal thought systems.

Tensions in a Picture

Figure 2.2

Journal: May 20th, 1995 Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado

While taking my drive today, I stopped at Kentucky Fried Chicken and picked up dinner (original recipe). I've stopped now to soak in Long's Peak. The valley is cast in an array of shadows. i am swallowed up by the light and shifting color, by the presence of the mountain and a longing like the longing of a child for its mother. Unmoved by the view, Prisca (my westy), hypnotically concentrates on the chicken in my hands.

I have my mother's hands. . .

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in an essay concerning feminism and autobiography written for my general exam, I chose this journal entry and picture (Figure 2.2) to represent my complex relationship with my mother. its many layers of possible meanings from nurturing protection to overshadowing domination, from needful dependence on closeness to gazing outward to independence resonate in our relationship. I also find the picture aesthetically pleasing both in its composition and its representation of my experience of wilderness.

Controversy arose in the oral general examination over how i had chosen to reproduce the original photograph. The essay focused on my mother and our relationship, and was not an account of the trip where I photographed the elk. i wanted a particular image to represent my relationship with my mother, and this picture came close to the image i wanted. But in the original photograph (Figure 2.3), a scientist has collared the mother elk. The focus of the photograph was the collared mother elk as a subject in research rather than the new born calf with its mother. This was not the image I wished to employ.

The intrusive mark of human intervention had been removed in the reproduction through the use of computer techniques[1]. I presented the journal entry and photograph without direct comment in the essay.

Figure 2.3

The examination committee raised two questions. What right did I have to alter a photograph in an autobiographical piece? Having reproduced the altered picture, was it deceptive to fail to comment on the alteration? This brings to mind Leigh Gilmore (1994a) comment that "(w)hat we have come to call truth or what a culture determines to be truth in autobiography, among other discourses, is largely the effect of a long an complex process of authorization" (p. 55). The ultimate question for me was who does have the authority to decide what constitutes a legitimate or truthful self-representation – the writer

or the reader. There are many ways to approach these questions. It raises the question of ethics and what constitutes a true self-representation. What does the reader/viewer of an autobiography have the right to expect? What is truth and what is deception? Which is more important -- the meaning of the author shown through representational imagery, or the physical facts of a particular event? Foucault (1977c, 1978) has shown us even the physical world is subject to social construction[2] and interpretation. We only see an apparent or reconstructed reality.

The meaning of a photograph traditionally is conflated with the apparent truth of an event. Yet the angle of the shot, or the position of the subject or composition can alter the image projected, changing its meaning radically. Images also convey an almost infinite number of different meanings, depending on who is looking at the image. Just as in written language, photos can be read for multiple, often conflicting, meanings. This was brought home to me years ago by a picture which hung in a friend's house. It was of his favorite place, looking down into a small bowl of land clear-cut of trees. Like many people with an interest in wildlife and nature photography, I perceived clear-cut land to be an ugly reminder of destruction -- the quintessential symbol of nature destroyed by humans. This symbolism, based on a conception of forests as naturally beautiful, was jarringly disrupted by his perception of cleared land as an inviting landscape. As an amateur archeologist, he sought out these the ideal conditions for finding ancient spear-points and other artifacts. Rather than seeing

destruction, he saw the land as a farm which has been harvested and was waiting to be replanted. indeed, these sites were on tree farms, and though the effects of harvesting was more dramatic than corn or wheat, the planting cycle of trees was (and is) managed with the same care as other crops. That picture forced me to confront the way I interpret both the physical world and photographs, as i recognized meaning is in the eye of the beholder.

My views of nature are heavily laden with traditional views -- nature as pure, untouched, wild, free. This view positions people, including presumably myself, as intruders, colonizers in the natural world. These are traditional modernist constructs, emphasizing the culture/nature dichotomy which links woman to nature (powerfully in the elk photograph, since it is a mother and baby, the quintessential expression of feminine destiny and purpose) and culture as a construction of men.

What is revealed about myself through the essay dealing with feminism and autobiography where I removed such an overt image of the functioning of the patriarchal system, both in the elk population and metaphorically in women's lives? How do my own constructions of femininity and the relationship between nature and woman affect my choice of composition? What internalized power relations and resistances are revealed in the process of creating these images?

in the reproduction of the mother elk, I framed and edited the image so that nature (read woman) is freed of human (read man's) influence. I have metaphorically throw man out of the garden and

reclaimed it in the name of Eve. I then can use this image of the unmolested mother elk to represent my own relationship to my mother. This was the meaning I wanted to present. But I believe something deeper is going on here. The editing also reveals something about my own sense of visibility and desire to become invisible. In all my nature photographs, I remove the signs of humans, including myself, from the frame. While I can not say precisely why, I believe the imagery is linked to my highly repressed memories from childhood -- I remember little of my childhood and early adolescence. It is as if I have made myself invisible in my own memory.

In addition, this image of the elk incorporates the ambiguity I feel toward social views of femininity and the heterosexual hierarchy in the relationships between men and women. I deal with the issues of control and domination by removing its sign from the reproduction. In all my photographs, I use cropping techniques to remove the signs of human intervention in order to construct the language of the picture in specific metaphoric ways which in turn reveals something about my own constructed view of myself as a woman in this society.

Women in the Body

Tied to the biological functions of their bodies through images in the media and social institutions, as well as their own internalized images of femininity, women often find trying to represent themselves beyond or against their bodies to be problematic. The female body is presented as controller of destiny, both through beauty and motherhood requirements. Image is everything and controlling and

representing the body in particular ways is tied to that image (Bordo, 1993b). As John Berger (1977) notes,

> a woman's presence expresses her own attitude to herself, and defines what can and cannot be done to her. Her presence is manifest in her gestures, voice, opinions, expressions, clothes, chosen surroundings, taste -- indeed there is nothing she can do which does not contribute to her presence. (p. 46)

In contrast, a man's presence is constructed differently. A man's presence is complimentary to that of a woman's presence. If her presence suggests what can or cannot be done to her, his suggests what he is capable of doing to others. indeed, his is "dependent upon the promise of power which he embodies. . . . (which) may be moral, physical, temperamental, economic, social, sexual -- but its object is always exterior to the man. . . . (it) suggests what he is capable of doing to you or for you" (Berger, 1977, p. 45). Women are the purview of the male gaze. Women often create representations of themselves which fit projected male desire and gaze, rather than their internal beliefs and aspirations, thereby becoming alienated from themselves early in life.

In advocating change in social definitions of femininity, women are confronted by definitions of feminine and unfeminine behavior, especially in regard to wielding power. Many issues of representation and identity center around issues of power and control. Heilbrun (1988) notes, "what has been forbidden to women is . . . the open admission of the desire for power and control over one's life (which inevitably means accepting some degree of power and control over other lives)" (p. 13). Many women are reluctant to cause discomfort to

others through the exercise of power. Confronting these issues on a personal level can lead women to resolve for themselves their own definition of what it means to be a woman.

When participating in behavior the society defines as "unwomanly," a woman is faced with the contradiction that when she exercises power, she is not behaving as a proper woman -- in affect, is not a woman. it takes a great deal of strength to redefine one's self in opposition to social norms. Women need to learn the skills of wielding political power, whether in the work-place or at the ballot box, if they are to obtain it for themselves outright. Women who have been successful in the public sphere have had to deal with issues of power and control. Heilbrun (1988) observes, "because many women would prefer (or think they would prefer) a world without evident power or control, women have been deprived of the narratives, or the texts, plots, or examples, by which they might assume power over -- take control of -- their own lives" (p. 17). The contradictions between the desire to set the boundaries of one's life and the desire to be viewed as a woman are difficult to negotiate.

One influence on how I construct those boundaries is through photography and photography based magazines. *National Geographic* introduced particular ways of looking at women and nature which I adopted almost without being aware of them. The world the magazine constructed seemed beautiful and I did not question the underlying premises for years.

The Geographic World

National Geographic was a monthly fixture in our household throughout my childhood, as it was for many of my middle-class peers. The articles about exotic places and unspoiled wilderness were pivotal in forming my concepts of both wilderness and cultures around the world. The magazine presents a romantic vision of an exotic world which coincidentally matches middle class expectations and standards (Lutz & Collins, 1993). Like many myths and beliefs acquired in childhood, the *National Geographic* view of the world centers on a white middle class American norm. *National Geographic* structures its images through conventions of nature versus culture, the nuclear family, the work ethic, colonial beliefs about race, and patriarchal images of femininity and masculinity. *National Geographic's* representation of itself as primarily a research organization and its reputation for the quality of its production both contribute to the veneer of objectivity the magazine presents, a veneer which conceals the influence of the government and other conservative institutions (Lutz & Collins, 1993).

National Geographic influenced my thinking through the way its images showed the world. The magazine was respected in our household, and reflected my parents interest in travel, science, nature and other cultures. It also reflected a type of paternalistic liberalism, in which America's relationships with "less developed" countries were romanticized. While certainly not the only influence on how I viewed nature, other cultures, or femininity (who could forget Bonanza on

Sunday nights, for instance), I now find the correlation between *National Geographic's* editorial stance and how I view and think about such things as wildlife and nature, or women in Western and non-Western cultures striking.

As a child, two types of articles captured my interests with their photographs. First there were those about nature -- wildlife, wilderness, animals. These articles presented the natural world in predictably modern imagery. Natural settings were either places of peace, quietude, almost spiritual in make up, or they were places of unmastered, uncontrollable, awesome power whether it was volcanoes in Iceland or lion hunts on the plains of the Serengeti. The spiritual connotations of nature as nurturer of the human spirit is matched in the multitude of pictures of mothers with children in third and fourth world cultures. in these images nature is not only constructed as the opposite of culture but also is positioned as feminine, especially maternal (Lutz & Collins, 1993). I came to see the "natural world" as a respite from the frantic life of "civilization" and as a place to be spiritually nurtured. I accepted the *National Geographic's* construction of nature and culture, and my place within this dichotomy.

The second type of article which attracted my interests were those featuring primitive cultures. These articles again reflect white middle class interests, often inscribing conventional views of motherhood through positioning women as primarily interested in child-care rather than involved in a complex array of activities within the

community. Reflecting white middleclass male heterosexual fantasies, these articles often feature bare-breasted, dark-skinned women. Lutz and Collins's (1993) research shows that darker skinned women are shown with bare-breasts more often than lighter skinned non-Westerners while the breasts of women of European descent are not shown. Lutz and Collins (1993) report that the professed attitude of the National Geographic Society is scientific: "The breast represents both a struggle against 'prudery' . . . and the pursuit of truth rather than pleasure" (p. 115, emphasis in original). Lutz and Collins go on to note that "(t)he struggle against prudery did not lead to documentation of the coming of nude sunbathing to Mediterranean beaches" (pp. 115-16). While quite willing to show the breasts of dark skinned women, there is no corresponding willingness to expose white-skinned women to the perusals of millions.

The objectification of dark-skinned women for primarily white male consumption, but also for female consumption, is an underlying, though denied, byproduct of the magazine. The images are as blatant in their artistic eroticism as the text is lacking in comment, reflecting a split between what can be spoken of and who can be looked at. As a young girl I found these images rife with sexual fantasy. I viewed them in the secrecy of guilt flavored with fascination and desire for the forbidden and unobtainable. In the process, I absorbed the underlying messages of the rights of the colonial, patriarchal gaze to possess what ever it desires. The images reinforced Western beliefs about femininity, modesty, and the linking of sexuality and race. Also

reinforced was the silence surrounding female nudity and its exploitation by the male gaze.

National Geographic and other magazines of its type have had a great influence on the way I see and approach the world. Its openly pro-American, socially and scientifically optimistic format have fed a sometimes provincial view of the third world. It's masculine viewpoint (Lutz and Collins, 1993), reinforced patriarchal constructions of family and work relationships, sexuality, and hierarchical relations among first, second, third and fourth world countries. These internalized, and rarely questioned views in turn affect my attitudes and relationships with minorities, immigrants, and others.

Still Searching for Representation

Voice has become an important concept to feminists in recent years (Grumet, 1990). It is difficult for women to find a voice which they recognize as their own to speak in traditions from which they have been excluded. As Carolyn Heilbrun (1988) notes: "it is hard to suppose women can mean or want what we have always been assured they could not possibly mean or want" (p. 18). Conventional autobiographic narrative is built on the cultural definitions of an identity based in part on gender construction. Foucauldian resistance occurring at the intersection of discourse and subject position can take place at the site of social roles assigned to women. Women can begin transforming and subverting the roles assigned to them.

When speaking of voice, it is important to remember that women are constructed as speaking in a limited range -- to be feminine

requires speaking softly, graciously, and deferentially. When women critique their situations forcefully, express personal desires and needs above the needs of others, or express anger, they are criticized and dismissed as shrill. By challenging the validity of particular constructions of knowledge, women can also challenge their silence. This challenge creates the opportunity to open up space for the representation of women. Women's biographers, as well as autobiographers, "(I)n questioning the absence of women from representation in so many traditions . . . find that they can create a space for their subjects through acknowledging the falseness of those separations" (Iles, 1992, p. 8). This space is a space in which women can speak in voices that are neither masculine or feminine, but is a chorus (Grumet, 1990) more fully their own.

Photographs, with their profuse detail and visual resemblance to the actual world, are prone to being treated as objective reality. In what Anne-Marie Willis (1995) terms the "hypervisuality" of technological societies, "the real has collapsed into credibility of appearance, authenticity has become a matter of detail" (p. 77). It is wise to remember that Barnum and Bailey built a fortune on this premise of seeing is believing. Photographs are composed and as such, they should be taken as representation rather than as objective fact. Photographs are intentional acts and as Bill Nichols (1994) notes, "many different ways of seeing surround the use of a camera. As long as human agency comes into play it will do so in relation to desire and the unconscious as well as reason" (p. 62). The photographer observes

a scene or event, attaches particular meaning to it and attempts to communicate that meaning through a photograph. The language of photography lies in part in the way the photograph is composed, the camera settings are adjusted and the photograph is developed and printed. Using these techniques, the photographer creates a representation of an experience and its meaning. The viewer also interprets the image drawing on her or his own experiences. Through this interactive process between the photographer and the viewer the meaning of a photograph is created.

Objectification of the Subject

The processes of acquiring images as artifacts operates for both the photographer, who sets out to capture as many interesting images as possible, and the viewer, who takes pleasure in images of the experiences of others. Susan Sontag notes, "Photographs really are experience captured, and the camera is the ideal arm of consciousness in its acquisitive mood" (Sontag, 1977, p. 3). Ethnographers also participate in acquisition -- they set out to acquire information and understanding of cultures, especially cultures different from their own. This acquisitiveness points to a common feature of both photography and ethnography. The finished product -- the ethnographic report and the photograph -- are objects, and the people they represent can come to be seen as objects also.

Objectification within ethnography and photography derives in part from their history. Modern ethnography and photography both developed in the nineteenth century and are tied to colonial attitudes

of conquest and possession prevalent at the time. Anthropology at the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century took as its mission the salvaging of non-Western cultures before the influence of Western technologically based societies changed them forever[3] (Clifford, 1986b). The production of ethnographic films and still photographs were incorporated into this mission as soon as the technology made it practical (De Brigard, 1975). These salvaging operations position non-Western cultures as victims needing outside intervention, exotic species on an endangered species list. The ethnographer is cast as a hero who, with a magic pen (or now magic computer) and camera, will save a culture by creating a record[4]. Through ethnography and its incorporation of photography, the powerful Western "self" colonizes the assumed to be less powerful non-Western "other." This objectification of the "other" continues as part of contemporary uses of photography.

In examining objectification it is important to remember the gaze plays in the process. The power structure involved between the viewer and the object of the gaze has been well critiqued (Berger, 1977; Devereaux, 1995; Miller, 1988). While photography is primarily implicated, ethnography also involves gaze. Lutz and Collins (1994) note, "The photograph and the non-Western person share two fundamental attributes in the culturally tutored experience of most Americans; they are objects at which we *look*" (p. 364 emphasis in original). Women are also presented as objects to be looked at, especially in advertising media. Viewing others as objects leads to

psychological distancing from them. We may perceive them as either intimately close and similar to us, or totally exotic with nothing in common, or somewhere in between. Many factors contribute to our perception including the way the person in the photo is positioned to return our gaze. The habitual construction of other cultures as exotic creates both the discomfort of the unknown and the reassurance that the gaze returned to us is a powerless gaze (Lutz & Collins, 1994). If the person has a familiar feel and the returned gaze is not hostile, we are more likely to feel empathy.

The intersection of photography, poetry and ethnography provides a space for the representation of a culture that incorporates more than facts about the people, objects and institutions which contribute to its existence. They allow for the expression of the multiple dimensions which form the intricate web of any culture. These same intersections incorporated into the work of creating self-representation for women will allow the expression of the complex and multiple dimension which make up a woman as a gendered, sexualized being. As forms self-representation and autobiographic work expand, space can be created for the exploration of the dynamic interaction of similarities and differences among selves or subject positions of women through a variety of images and imagery.

CONCLUSION

Autobiographical Recursions:

Longs Peak (Figure 2.1), with its long cape of snow, has come to represent my whole trip to Colorado in late May of 1995. It has a

presence, as if it were a living thing and it is this presence i wish to represent. It also has an austerity which reflects my own feelings when I camp alone. These trips are often full of contrasts between the awe I feel at the beauty around me, and the despair I sometimes fall into at night when thinking about many aspects of my life. In my photographs i hope to invoke in others the awe which is etched in my memory. The feelings of despair are recorded in my journals to be held private. I find the contrast between the recorded memories of the photographs and the recorded memories of the journal to be confusing. I have not resolved this confusion over what these trips mean to me and how I represent them to others.

The mother elk (Figures 2.2 and 2.3) are from a different trip, but the contrasting feelings were present on that trip also. Part of the difficulty arises because I struggle with what I believe others want of me, what I want of myself, and the realization that what others want may be only a projection of my own subconscious. On the Canadian trip I struggled with many identity issues and my position as a student and as a woman. i the sense of disunity I felt then is recaptured in my feelings of disunity when i compare the title of the chapter, "A Collared Elk" and the photograph of the mountain in snow. The contrast causes me to stop and wonder what's going on, even as the writer of the piece. Its rare to get this response to my own writing.

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Creative strategies are needed to conceive of self-representation and to engage in autobiographic work in order to

attempt to read the cultural scripts handed down to a woman and the multiple selves and roles through which she expresses herself. The old scripts are deeply ingrained. Women are not only defined by others, but define themselves, through their bodies and cultural expectations. Assumptions about what it means to be a woman and how a woman may represent herself are often left unquestioned.

Perhaps before the questions about representation are approached, questions of difference should be addressed. As Bordo's (1993a, 1993b) analysis of images and construction of self shows, gender formation and distinctions affect all of a woman's day to day lived experiences. Gender roles may be dictated to women, but with each decade, how women negotiate those roles changes. As women gain new perspectives on their subject positions as daughters, non-mothers, and mothers they devise new strategies for dismantling the dichotomy between public and private. Strategies can take many forms from finding new language to speak about gender and difference, to making career choices which take advantage of the internet to make income in the home.

Complicating gender issues are the interconnections and distinctions between sexuality and gender. How a woman views compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1986a) and her own sexuality in regards to both men and women problematizes the relationship between gender and sexuality. These issues are of major importance to feminist theorizing.

Autobiographic work allows space to explore issues of gender and sexuality. As traditional assumptions and roles are problematized, women can begin to branch into wider and wider arenas. New strategies, such as a reappropriation of a visual, non-masculine aspect in autobiography, offer opportunities to play with the complexities of multiple selves. Since the construction of gender and sexuality form an almost mandatory foundation for identity in Western thought, in chapters three and four I will examine the construction of women's gender and sexuality as they are implicated in the roles women and men play in society. In chapter five I examine approaches to self-representation and autobiographic work of women which might better reveal the constructions and situatedness of gender and sexuality. Autobiographic work, whether for public consumption or for use by the individual writer, offers a space to come to grips with the complex array multiple roles and identities which are part of a woman's life.

NOTES

1 I used the computer program **Adobe Photo-Shop** (Adobe Systems) to alter the reproduction. I first converted the color photograph to continuous tone black and white. Then I used one of the copying features to copy hair from the upper and lower parts of the neck to cover the collar. I did the same with the elk's tongue, copying bark from the background tree.

2 Oliver Sacks (1995) reports a case which dramatically shows how even sight is socially constructed from birth. A man had been blind since childhood as the result of complication from illnesses. In 1991, at age fifty, he underwent surgery to partially restore his sight. Sacks relates what the man later told him: "There was light, there was movement, there was color, all mixed up. . . . Then out of the blur came a voice that said "Well?" Then, and only then, . . . did he finally realize that this chaos of light and shadow was a face" (p. 114). While the

man's retinas were able to register light, he could not see in any meaningful way. His mind did not know how to interpret the images his eyes were registering. In fact, he had come to understand the world through touch, and touch remained his primary way to make sense of the world around him. Only after touching something was he able to "see" it properly. Even his cat and dog were confusing until he touched them to tell which was which. He found seeing to be so confusing that when he later lost his sight again, he was relieved.

3 Franz Boas and others fostered the image of anthropological study as a "last chance rescue operation" (Clifford, 1986b, p. 113). In 1921, Malinowski decried the disappearance of cultures for study just as anthropologists were equipped and ready to begin, while in the 1950's Claude Lévi-Strauss wrote of the breakdown of social structures in "a global process of entropy" (Clifford, 1986b, p. 112).

4 James Clifford (1986b) takes issue with many of the assumptions underlying these positions of ethnography, especially "the assumption that with rapid change something essential ('culture'), a coherent differential identity, vanishes" (p. 113). Just as a coherent self or transcendent individual is a myth, a coherent cultural identity is a myth. Cultural identity is fluid rather than fixed and often it adapts to the new and changing circumstances while maintaining a cultural sense of identity. An example of a sense of cultural identity after radical and protracted change is the Houma Tribe in Louisiana. Despite almost three hundred years of European contact, loss of territory, intermarriage with other groups and the replacement of their native Houma language with French, they still claim a tribal identity (Kniffen, Gregory & Stokes, 1987), albeit one that flows and changes with the pressures and changing political climate of the federal government.

III / Views in the Mirror: Gender in the Split Body

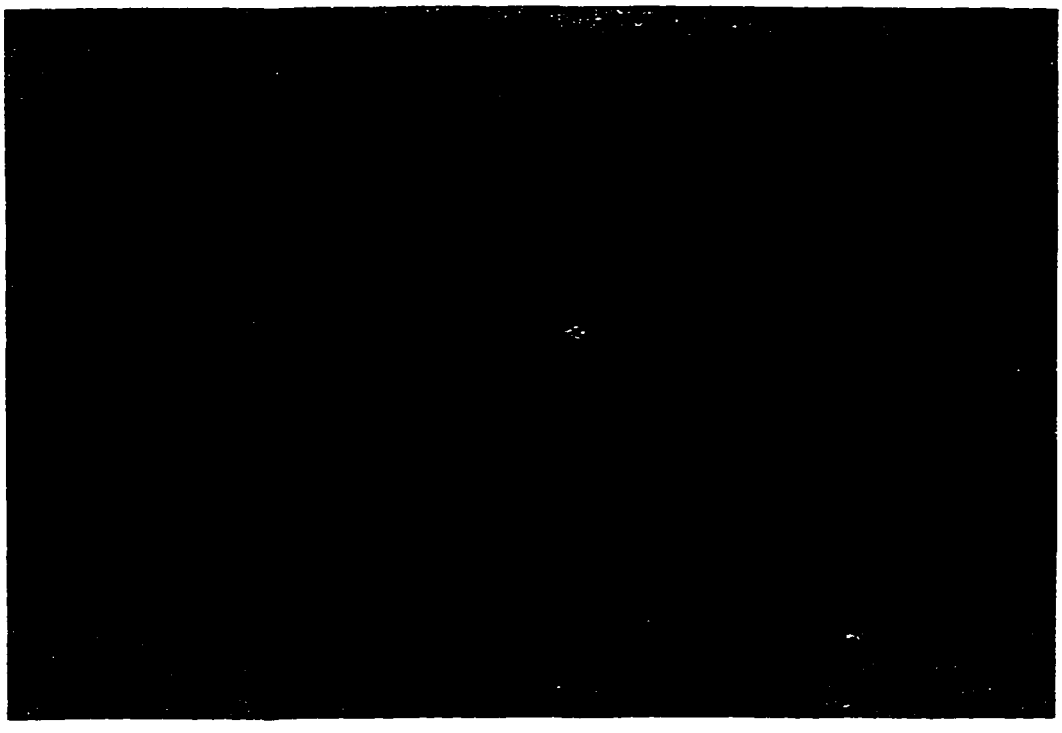

Figure 3.1

It happened in the early 60s. I was in the first years of elementary school – second or third grade. My mother was in her early forties, as I am now. A lump was discovered in her breast and surgery was immediately ordered. At that time breast cancer was synonymous with a death sentence, requiring harsh measures to remove all traces of the disease from the body. A woman had to agree to a radical mastectomy before cancer was even diagnosed. The biopsy would be performed during surgery and treatment decisions made by the doctor on the spot. Mom went to sleep a physically whole woman, not knowing how she would wake up. She woke with right lymph nodes,

chest muscles and breast missing, with a mutilated body in a world that judges women on their physical perfection.

I have only vague memories of that period, little beyond mother going to the hospital. She was there for three weeks, but I have no memory of the duration, nor of her absence at home. The memory of that time, the fears I must have had about my mother dying in surgery or of cancer, have been successfully repressed.

Sometime during those early years at Myrtle Beach Air Force Base I withdrew from my family, becoming the silent, good little girl who kept out of the way and out of trouble. When I was not playing the tom-boy, chasing frogs and exploring with Delores from next door, I spent hours alone in my bedroom constructing a fantasy world where I was the invincible, immortal heroine. I relinquished the physical world of the body and of emotions for a world of the mind where everything was well controlled and pain with its associate emotions were banished. It was not until thirty years later that I wondered if there might be a connection to my mother's surgery.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Gender and Sexuality Edifice

The construction of a woman's gender and sexuality is complex, occurring within an array of historical and contemporary discourses intersecting with the experiences of a particular life of a woman with a singular genetic and psychological makeup. My mother's cancer surgery and resulting physical and psychological scars affected my

own gender development in ways I cannot fully conceive. How did her experiences and projections of those experiences affect my views of femininity and the female body? How did my father's reactions and the changes in my parents' relationship impact how I came to see relationships and sexuality? How did these factors intersect with commonplace social views of the female body and femininity? How have my sense of self and identity been affected by my negotiations of gender and sexuality within my family and in a patriarchal social system?

Sexuality and gender are intertwined within modernist social constructions as to render the separation of the two impossible. Gayle Rubin (1992) notes, "The cultural fusion of gender with sexuality has given rise to the idea that a theory of sexuality may be derived directly out of a theory of gender" (p. 307). But the theoretical treatment of sexuality as a derivative of gender has been challenged by many theorists. A single theory, positing a dichotomy of sex as "natural" and gender as "cultural" has given way to theories which recognize the social construction of concepts of "nature," resulting in more complex views of the construction of both sex and gender (Rubin, 1992; Butler 1990, 1993; Weeks, 1991; Foucault, 1978). While recognizing that gender and sexuality develop in complex interaction, I follow this theoretical approach by examining sex and gender separately. This chapter explores the acquisition of gender in relation to women's self-representation, while chapter four examines the fluid nature of sexuality and representation.

In many ways, I experience myself as living toward the edge of the patriarchal system. Here I do not so much refer to the general marginalization of women as to the conditions which have led me to live as a self-supporting divorced woman of forty-one, without children, living alone without a committed sexual relationship, within a loose community of academic friendships but at some distance from my family. This life style is at odds with the "sex/gender system" which Rubin (1975) defines as "the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied" (p. 159). This sex/gender system is based on heterosexual marriage and sexuality geared toward reproduction. Adults who remain single, with or without children, marry but remain childless, or participate in same-sex relationships in either short or long term relationships, begin to move toward the margins of the system, creating perturbations throughout the system. For example, the rise in single parent households impact the sex/gender system by changing the demographics of the family, education and the economy. The patriarchal system as idealized by religion, business, law and education[1] is in fact becoming more porous at the margins as women, and other marginalized groups, assert their own desires and expectations[2] and changing conceptions of gender roles.

Splitting the Mind from the Body

Women who challenge the masculine/feminine gender constructions which form the framework of the mind/body dichotomy

explore new landscapes where cultural definitions of femininity and woman may be redefined. The Cartesian separation of mind and body produced a hierarchy of knowledge tied to gender. Mind, in which rested human essence, was associated with "higher" modes of awareness, considered masculine traits -- reason, detachment, objectivity. Body, which was a distraction and interference to the objective mind, was designated as "low", or closer to nature and was identified with traits assigned as female -- emotions, desires, the irrational. Mind formed the basis of a uniform stable self, coherent in its existence, capable of reason, able to objectively assess knowledge, including knowledge of itself (Bordo, 1987; Flax, 1987). In order to achieve this sublime state, the body, subject to disease, aging, desires and bad temper, was designated as foreign, "other" to the "true" self. Through this construction, Sidonie Smith (1993) notes, "unique, unitary, unencumbered, the self escapes all forms of embodiment" (p. 6). Thus unencumbered with physical limitations, this self is universal in its existence. Limits were set on inclusion in this universal state of selfhood in order to secure it uniqueness within its universality. The model chosen for this unique self was the European male intellectual, such as Descartes himself. Smith (1993) continues, "cultural practices set various limits, and those limits are normative limits of race, gender, sexuality, and class identification" (p. 10). In order to maintain the separation of the mind/self from the body, those designated as "other," especially women, came to be associated more closely with the body, and the functioning of that body came to be regarded as

natural destiny, rather than as a social construction. Those included in the universal self could transcend their bodies, those not included were destined to be controlled by their bodies particular physical characteristics. The capacity to bear children became the defining characteristic for women.

The modernist construction of the unified self, located in the mind and separated from the body, raises issues for the construction of women's identity. Issues emerging as a result of the fragmentation through the body/mind spilt, and contradictory messages of honor and devaluing of the feminine, impact women's construction of gender in discordant ways. Are there ways for women to name and locate themselves which disrupt the patriarchal definitions of gender and femininity? As Adrienne Rich (1986b) reminds us,

> Begin . . . not with a continent or a country or a house, but with the geography closest in -- the body. . . . locating the grounds from which to speak with authority as women. Not to transcend this body, but to reclaim it. To reconnect our thinking and speaking with the body of this particular living human individual, a woman. Begin . . . with the material, with matter, mma, madrem mutter, moeder, modder, etc., etc. (pp. 212-13)

In exploring possible locations and landscapes of different expressions of gender, I draw on object relations theory (Chodorow 1978, Flax, 1990, Benjamin, 1988), theories of autobiography, subjectivity and the body (Bordo, 1989, 1993b; Smith, 1987, 1993) and theories of gender and sexuality construction (Butler, 1990, 1993; Sedgwick 1985, 1990, Fuss, 1989), many of which incorporate Michel Foucault's (1972, 1977c, 1978) use of genealogies, power relations and the process and effects of discursive formations.

SOCIALLY SITUATED WOMEN

The Rights of the Body

In American society, the mapping of gender tightly defines appropriate behavior of both men and women. The bedrock dichotomy of male and female, which forms the foundation of other hierarchical dichotomies, permeates patriarchal systems. Woman's place is powerfully inscribed within patriarchal systems. As I mentioned earlier, place is an important aspect of identity (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991) including gender identity. Geographic location of family and home, of roots or alternately, rootlessness, shapes each person's self-vision[3] and world view in different ways. A woman's birth family, ancestral cultures and current communities each contribute to the beliefs and ideas she embraces or rejects as she relates to the world. These cultures and communities help form the map of the landscape of her life. Beyond this, place has a metaphorical meaning for women also.

Traditionally, a woman's place was related to the man to whom she was connected -- first her father or brother, who transferred her to her husband. Her place was in his home, her actions constrained by his will. This historical tradition is ancient, tracing its roots to the incest taboo. The exchange of women's reproductive capacities between the male members of different tribes or families was codified in the incest taboo and established men's rights in women's bodies, rights which were not reciprocal (Lévi-Strauss, 1960, 1969; Chodorow, 1978; Lerner, 1986; Rubin, 1975).

As Rubin (1978) explains, in the transfer of women, the power of the phallus is transferred through the conduit of the woman's body – her production of the next generation of males. Thus women were and remain important to the power of men, and their control through the requirements of gendered behavior remains a goal of patriarchal systems. Women's rights to their own bodies were usurped by men in the name of tribal needs, and justified through evolving tribal myths. Male supremacy translated into myths of creation in which women and the symbols of ancient the mother-goddess, the snake, become the source of evil (Lerner, 1986).

The Husbanding of Wives

In Lerner's (1986) history of the emergence of patriarchy, class hierarchies are linked to hierarchical gender relations. Women drew their status and rights from the men who controlled them. Attached to his household, her place was hierarchically and geographically attached to her husband. The wife was placed in a subordinate position of financial and material dependence, placed as caretaker of her husbands property and children. Dependence, subordination and caretaking became reified as "natural" gender characteristics of women.

Many Western traditions and beliefs still in practice reflect these ancient traditions. While a woman may make her own marriage arrangements, young women are encouraged to associate with men of their father's or close to their fathers class and status (Scott, 1984). Fathers often still "give away" their daughters to husbands. In

fundamentalist Christian teaching, women are admonished that "their attitude toward the husband should be that of reverence, respect, and submission" (LaHaye & LaHaye, 1978, p. 82).

After marriage, the economic reality that, "based on annual earnings, for every $1 of a man's pay, a woman could expect to earn . . . in 1992: 66¢" (WAC, 1993), encourages couples to establish their household near the husband's job and move according to his career. The birth of children can lead to the premature retirement of women from the workforce as quality child care may totally absorb her already lower income, reinforcing financial and psychological dependence.

Schools supports a patriarchal system. As Grumet (1988) notes, the very structure of school hierarchy replicates the patriarchally idealized family with the principal, usually male, taking the role of authoritative father; the teachers, predominately female, taking the role of mother and the students as the children. Walkerdine (1990) traces the process by which schools educate children into their socially specified roles. School structure as an extension of the domestic sphere and the teacher's direct, though at times unconscious, reinforcing of traditional gender behaviors and attitudes provides social validation of particular gender roles.

Misogyny within the Gender System

Much misogyny exists in the sex/gender system yet remains hidden. Misogynist attitudes about the potential and capabilities of women are internalized by women as well as men, creating a self-

fulfilling structure which discourages women from using their full abilities. Areas as diverse as employment, recreation, and housing are affected by underlying beliefs about women's ability to handle physical labor, technical information, and decisions under stress.

Even something as obviously evil as domestic violence is structured in such a way that the underlying attitudes toward women are not challenged. Women are conditioned to be self-sacrificing caregivers, and when these attributes fail to please the care-receiver, the woman may be the first to be blamed. Women are conditioned to look for a reason for violent male behavior that can be accounted for and controlled by their own actions. The underlying attitude that men have the right to expect women to be responsible for their (men's) needs and behavior, is not challenged. Outside intervention is often not sought until the violence takes physical forms. Psychological abuse will remain unchallenged unless the women has the psychological, physical and financial wherewithal to seek outside help. Even Al-anon, the support group for people who live with alcoholics, commonly wives of alcoholics, strongly discourages women from leaving abusive husbands. Rather, women are urged to have patience and to persevere within the situation (Al-anon, 1973/1981).

Within many marriages, ancient traditions of male rights are barely concealed by the patina of modern culture with its recent laws protecting wives and children from physical violence. For instance, the incest taboo, seen as leading to the initial reification of women's reproductive capacity (Lerner, 1986, Lévi-Strauss, 1960), is a statement

of male sexual privileges. Judith Herman (1981) points out that it is no coincidence that the most common form of sexual abuse of children, that of fathers against their daughters, is not forbidden in the Christian Bible (Leviticus 18: 7-16)[4]. The ancient incest taboo laid out men's rights to women[5], while forbidding men access to the female property of other men[6].

Not only is the sexual control of women institutionalized but also that of men, as the phenomenon of male homophobia[7] illustrates. Eve Sedgwick (1985) draws a corollary between homophobia and misogyny in her examination of homosocial bonds and the use of random terrorism to control sexual behavior. She links male homophobia, with its random acts of violence against men suspected of homosexuality, with the necessity to control the heterosexual male population, and by extension the female population as well. Homophobia serves society in that what society needs is "a disproportionate leverage over the channels of bonding between all pairs of men. To maintain such a disproportionate leverage, however, requires that shows of power be unpredictable" (Sedgwick, 1985, p. 88). No one, what ever their sexual orientation, can be sure when and where they might be attacked. Sedgwick notes that lynching in the South served to subdue the African-American population through this type of threat of random violence. Rape serves this same purpose with women.

As a woman, traveling alone awakens half suppressed memories and social warnings of the dangers women will suffer without a male

protector. I am often asked by women if I do not worry that "something" will happen to me when I am camping. They are not concerned that i will break my leg or run out of money. The unarticulated fear is that I will be raped, the underlying subtext of control in the lives of women in our society[8]. The threat of rape, dramatized in both the news and entertainment media as well as crime statistics, serves to keep women in their physical and psychological place -- cautious, suspicious of unknown men, remaining at home at night, not traveling alone -- while no comparable sense of victimization is built, for instance, out of violent crimes against (heterosexual) men. Charlotte Perkins Gilman characterizes the threat of rape to maintain women in the home in this way:

> (Women) must be guarded in the only place of safety, the home. Guarded from what? From men. From womanless men who may be prowling about while all women stay home. The home is safe because women are there. Out of doors is unsafe because women are not there. . . . We try to make the women safe in the home, and keep them there; to make the world safe for women and children has not occurred to us. So the boy grows, in the world as far as he can reach it, and the girl does not grow equally, being confined to the home. (Gilman, quoted in Frederick and Hyde, p. xxii)

Misogyny and rape, connected to, though not restricted to, men's sexual rights and rights of free movement within the public sphere, serves to condition women to the domestic sphere.

Girls grow into womanhood, their gender identity coalescing within this social milieu. Judith Butler (1987) provides one description of gender as "a contemporary way of organizing past and future cultural norms, a way of situating oneself in and through those norms, an active

style of living one's body in the world" (p. 131). Society creates gendered identities difficult for women to disrupt by the normalization and romanticizing of woman's place as home maker and mother, while normalizing misogyny and the exercise of power as appropriate masculine attitudes. For myself, the association of the home-space with mothers is so normalized that though I have lived on my own for 20 years and my parents are divorced and both living in places I have never lived, it is my mother's house, not mine, that I refer to as "home."

THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER CONNECTION

Figure 3.2

May 20, 1995: (Continued from chapter two)

I have my mother's hands. Long fingered, smooth skinned with a fine crosshatch of lines just showing. But it is not the shape of them, or the way they are aging that makes them like hers. It is much deeper. At times, I have my mother's hands. I am her. My body language, the way

I hold my hands and stand, the words I think to say, the impatience I feel, my frown and furrowed brow, all of it her. At times I feel trapped, my self lost to another presence in my mind and body. Other times, I feel a fierce longing for her, for a relationship beyond the struggle for separation.

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Separation and Connection

Marianne Hirsch (1989), in her analysis of family relationships in nineteenth-century literature notes that in many novels by women writers, "The bond between mother and daughter, daughter and mother, must be broken so that the daughter can become a woman" (p.43). The struggle to differentiate myself from my mother forms one of the major themes in my life as a woman. The struggle is full of contradictions. At times I want to be a child again, to lie in my mother's lap and hear her tell me that the angels brought me to her. At other times I find our relationship so oppressive, I flee from it.

I literally feel at times I am my mother, just as the journal entry above describes it. I have struggled with how this situation came about and what its implications are for my sense of self and identity. The watershed event in my mother's life of breast cancer and its psychological effects may be a factor in my feeling at times that I live my mother's life. If she projected on to me her own desires and needs to recapture and replace her lost sense of femininity, then perhaps I internalized those projections as well as a sense of responsibility to meet those needs. I feel afraid to disappoint my mother by not being

what she seems to want me to be -- a young woman with a whole life of possibilities before me. Yet I am a mature woman with graying hair, and a multitude of both good and bad experiences behind me. From my perspective, i find it hard to maintain my footing as an independent adult (though I am well aware that her perspective is different). I find it hard to accept her expressions of disappointment in the way our mother-daughter relationship plays out at times. These disappointments are inevitable: we are different women, born a generation apart, with different concepts of what it means to be a woman, a daughter and a mother. We see the rights and responsibilities of these gender roles differently. At times I feel trapped in the construction of these roles because i do not have the psychological finesse to change my reactions to her. This sense of enmeshment is part of the merging i feel with her.

Many factors are at play in the struggle with my mother in her fulfillment of the premier gendered role -- motherhood. The style of mothering in my family, both from my own experience and my mother's description of her mother, does not fit the social fantasy about women with inborn nurturance anticipating the needs of children. Both my grandmother and mother had the intelligence, logical detachment and creativity which marked many of the successful business people I encountered working in the printing industry. Indeed my mother struggled to construct a career as a writer while remaining within the confines of the domestic sphere, while my grandmother, a housewife until the death of her husband left her with

two children to raise, went to work as a cashier because she did not have suitable job training for a higher paying job. Both had the competitive personality needed for a successful career in business. But social convention dictated that these skills and personality traits would be limited to use in the home to raise children.

In my mother's and grandmother's generations children were a social/cultural obligation and women were defined through the domestic sphere -- providing homes and children for their husbands. In this situation children are not so much valued for who they are as what they are -- extensions of the domestic sphere. This relationship structures the mother/child relationship in particular ways which leads to the internalization of the devaluation of both mothers and children. Rather then gaining value in her own right as a woman, a mother is assigned value through her husband's status, the home she keeps and the children she raises.

I have always felt that the sense of self worth in all three women (my grandmother, mother and myself) was not strong, perhaps from the social demand for sacrifices beyond the capacity of the mothers to bear, or perhaps from the psychoiogically internalized ways of relating to children. Other psychological factors also affected the situations -- my great-grandmother grew up in an orphanage, my grandparents with their small children lost their home in the depression, and my own family experienced great instability as we traveled with my father's career in the air force. In addition, the trauma of my mother's cancer and surgery affected her self esteem as a woman.

As a result of the conflicts between the experiences and difficulties of our lives and the idealized standards of femininity and womanhood, there seems to be an ambivalent attachment between the generations -- me to my mother, she to her mother. Each seems to struggle with a sense of self attached to a mother perceived as caring and detached in turns. The ambivalence arises directly from the conflict between the need to be validated and the felt rejection on the part of the other -- whether mother or daughter. This ambivalence is not unique. Indeed, Flax (1985) notes, "there seems to be an endless chain of women tied ambivalently to their mothers, who replicate this relation with their daughters" (p. 37). Daughters can come to function as scaffolding for the mother's ego and self definition. These attitudes toward the daughters are introjected into the daughters' personalities and acted upon. Thus, each generation of women in our family have personalities which seem to foster relational detachment as well as dependency and enmeshment.

Daughters in my maternal line, unable to disentangle from their mothers, seem to fail to achieve an assured sense of self. In this state of blurred ego boundaries, to separate from one's mother is to separate from one's self. As Flax (1985) notes, "Differentiation is a central issue for women because of the special character of the mother-daughter relationship" (p. 22). The establishing of a female identity within our culture occurs in complex interactions of psychological needs and social expectations, heavily influenced by the hierarchy of power and strict definitions of gender and sexual

orientations. Flax (1990) believes the object relations theory of psychoanalysis has a great deal to offer feminist approaches to these issues.

Object Relations

Theories of object relations reject the idea of knowledge as independent of the knower and focus on the importance of the pre-oedipal relationship with the mother. They abandons many of the misogynist aspects of Freudian and Lacanian[10] theory, such as the female as castrated male. In addition, the theories avoid the essentialist position of a fixed human nature, instead placing the infant's development, including gender development, within interactive relationships. In addition, object relations theories "encourage and support the suspicions of feminist (and other) theorists about the postmodernist project of abandoning all language of or desire for a self" (Flax, 1990, p. 110), in which a woman's right to define herself can again become lost in the disintegration of self[11].

In the object relations theory, the sense of self develops first through physical and psychological relations between the child and first its mother or primary care-giver in the pre-oedipal stage, and with its father through the oedipal conflict. Object relations theory[12] provides one map of the psycho-social processes which constitutes gender, identity and self. With it we can begin to plot psychological development of gender within the cultural construction of the family and analyze our position within the unconscious characteristics of relationships.

In the weeks following birth, the mother and baby form what Margaret Mahler (1985) terms a symbiotic relationship. "The rudimentary ego in the newborn baby and the young infant has to be complemented by the emotional rapport of the mother's nursing care, a kind of social symbiosis" (p. 202). Within this relationship, the baby begins to develop a sense of itself as a physical being. Though originally perceiving itself as merged with the mother/world, the reality of the mother's coming and going, as well as frustrations of unmet needs produce a body ego. This is constituted by two structures – self representations of an inner body image consisting of sensations separate from the newly forming ego, and a bounded "body self," basically the skin. Mahler (1985) states that each contributes to the infant's emerging ego:

> The infant's inner sensations form the core of the self. . . . the crystallization point of the "feeling of self" around which a "sense of identity" will become established. . . . The sensoriperceptive organ–the "peripheral rind of the ego," as Freud called it–contributes mainly to the self's demarcation from the object world. (p. 203)

Thus, self begins with a sense of the physical body and its needs. These lead to a sense of an inner world. From the beginning, the body is central to conceptions of self. Not coincidentally, it is on the physical body that the dichotomy of male and female is inscribed.

The power within the mother-child relationship coupled with the sporadic presence of the father, at least from the baby's point of view, creates conflicts within the mother-infant relationship. The child is dependent on the mother for its physical and psychological survival and comes to fear this dependence. Chodorow (1978) notes,

"Children of both sexes, even with kind mothers, will maintain a fearsome unconscious maternal image as a result of projecting upon it (the internalized image), the hostility derived from their own feelings of impotence" (p. 122). The contradictory feelings of attachment and fear of dependency create ambivalence in the child. This ambivalence is difficult for the child to deal with and becomes repressed, since it would be dangerous to reject the person upon whom it is dependent. For the mother, the child becomes part of her identity through a combination of psychological factors (Mahler, 1985; Winnicott, 1986) and social expectations (Chodorow, 1978). Conversely, she is obligated to prepare the child to move out into the world on its own. Therefore the tension in the relationship also creates ambivalence on the part of the mother.

Chodorow notes that one reason women mother is because in our patriarchal social structure, women are mothered by other women and identify with their mothers role of mothering. Gilligan (1982) and Chodorow (1978) both theorize that because the maturing female infant forms her identity in almost exclusive relationships with women caregivers, she comes to internalize relational capabilities as female characteristics. She internalizes and identifies with such attributes as nurturance and empathy[13]. Chodorow (1978) notes, "Girls emerge . . . with a basis for 'empathy' built into their primary definition of self in a way that boys do not" (p. 167). This difference in gender identity, stated with such certainty by Chodorow, is problematic. Patriarchal gender constructions are explained in such a way that girls

and women without these characteristics are positioned as abnormal, or lacking in some elemental way. These constructions call into question the very gender identity of women who do not fit the construction. Internalized images of gender form the basis from which women self-police their actions to conform to gender norms as they negotiate the very meanings of normalized gender. What it means to be a woman in part means to be fragmented by contradictions within the process of gender formation.

WOMEN'S FRAGMENTATION WITHIN THEIR BODY/ PSYCHE.

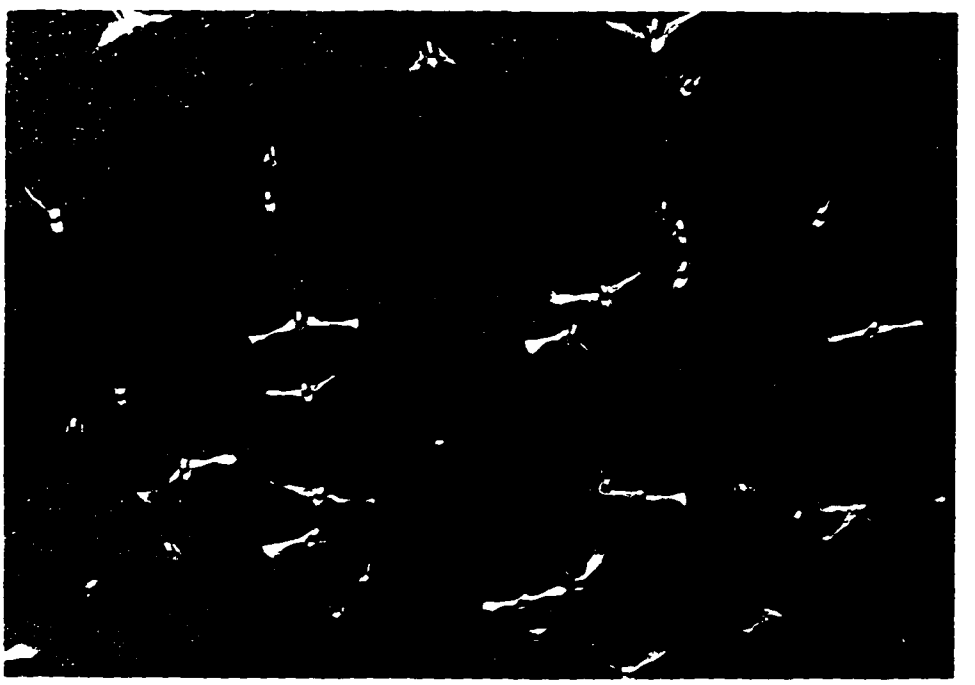

Figure 3.3

Reflections: March, 1993 - Baton Rouge

For most of my life, I felt I did not "fit in." I felt an outsider to friends and colleagues. I struggled to fit into the niches I saw others women fit into – a place in the family, one among a group of friends, the role of

responsible worker, the role of competitive career woman, eventually the role of wife. I always felt something was wrong with me, because I could not understand the system, the process of being a member of a group. In my undergraduate years and through my twenties and thirties, as I struggled with depressions, I often wished I could be "normal," like the women I saw around me – have a close family to be nurtured in, have a man to love me, be married, raise children, act and feel normal. In those days I believed strongly in normal.

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Naming Landscapes

Since the day God and Adam got together and named all the animals, the power of naming has rested with men, a seeming God-given right. To name, to create discourse, is to create particular kinds of knowledge and to preclude the recognition of other kinds of knowledge. Social expectations of gender create forms of knowledge which often require women to accept situations and beliefs which are self-destructive, contradict experience and disregard physical law. Phyllis Chesler (1978) analyzes patriarchal religious beliefs in which males, including male gods, give birth, and the religious hierarchical system in which women are subordinated because of spiritual impurity. She notes, "the great power of . . . naming . . . blinds us to the simplest, most commonsense truths we know; it allows us, it commands us, to reject our own realities, to reject *ourselves*, in the belief that spiritual perfection is foreign to our personal, moral consciousness" (p. 43, emphasis in original). The power to name is the power to establish the

existence of one's self and one's particularities in relation to social expectations. Naming accesses the power of privileged discourses, which Foucault (1977c, 1978) shows, define and produce normalized subjects. As strongly as Western society privileges individuality, it stresses the importance of aspiring to an idealized, universalized state of "normal." To be normal is to be sane, healthy, within the law, acceptable and included. To be abnormal or subnormal is to be consigned to the other side of the dichotomy: crazy, disabled, outlaw, unacceptable and excluded. Heilbrun (1981) describes an outsider as "identified by exclusion from the cultural patterns of bonding at the heart of society, at its center of power" (p.38).

Gender, race, class, ethnicity and culture intersect and interact with each other and through discourses of normalcy, producing categories defining people by degree of conformity to the standards of normalcy. Meanings are constructed through a variety of discourses for characteristics -- reproductive organs, skin color, ethnic or religious origin, sexuality (Foucault, 1977c, 1978) -- consigning certain "others" to the margins of the major discourses.

To be named as marginalized in the dominant discourse and excluded from privileged locations of knowledge can provide a space for the creation of resistant discourses. Subcultures emerge as points of resistance to the effects of dominant discourses. Women, African-Americans, Jews, Gays and Lesbians, as well as smaller groups, such as deaf culture, each work to create and control knowledge about themselves. These marginalized groups seek to reappropriate

subject positions from the dominant discourses which inscribe marginalized groups as outsiders (Heilbrun, 1981). Marginalized group members bond together to create a space which resists those dominant discourses, creating a safe location in which to exist. "Outsiders . . . may gain strength in their reaction to exclusion if they bond together, offering each other comradeship, encouragement, protection, support" (Heilbrun, 1981, p. 38).

Educational Acquisitions

Women are encompassed by the gendered discourses of many institutions – media, education, science, medicine, law, religion, the family – combining to establish discourses of femininity. One powerful influence is school. In school, children acquire the social norms of gendered behavior. But this acquisition is neither uniform or consistent for girls. Judith Butler (1990) notes, "gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts, and . . . gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities" (p. 3) which interact so that it is impossible to "separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is . . . produced and maintained" (p.3). Through indoctrination into the various aspects of femininity, women become fragmented in their beliefs, their views of their bodies and their mental capabilities in an attempt to resolve the contradictions between their lived experience and the ideals of femininity.

While the initiation into gender begins in infancy and continues into adulthood, the school experience of girls regulates their acquisition of

gender as well as their relationship to knowledge and thought. Gendered dichotomies surround educational activity and thought. Girls learn early they are expected to be passive, receptive, and less able than boys to learn subjects involving rational thinking, i.e. math and science (Walkerdine, 1990; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Yet in our liberal, democratic system, all children are also said to be equal, denying girls' experiences of gender divisions. Walkerdine (1990) notes, "our education system in its most liberal form treats girls 'as if' they were boys" (p. 46) sending the message that a girl can have and do anything a boy can, while expecting feminine behavior. In addition, educational discourses, incorporating ideals of democracy, equality and objectivity, deny the existence of contradictions between patriarchal definitions of educational success and femininity. Girls are forced to negotiate in silence the confusion surrounding their lived experience and what they are told about educational opportunity. This creates a "delusional reality," Walkerdine (1990) notes, "produced in the very practices which deny differences by failing to engage with the contradiction and pain produced through the act of splitting – of being positioned both like a boy and like a girl and having to remain 'sane'" (p. 46). The contractions continue as the children who are all equal grow into people who are all equal, but girls grow into women.

The Feminine in Mascuiine Competition

The fragmentation of girlhood continues into adulthood, as women attempt to resolve contradictions between roles assigned to women and their own aspirations. As women pursue careers outside

the home, they contend with feminine requirements of passivity and service to others while competing with men for power in the business world. This ability to hold seemingly contradictory attributes can serve women. During my years working in the printing industry women for the first time entered the sales forces at the printing companies for which I worked. These women used the very qualities idealized as feminine -- nurturance, service, self-sacrifice -- with a vengeance to topple sales records, winning accounts such as ATT and First Union Bank, in a field which had for years claimed customers would not buy from women.

These women salespeople had appropriated male power and prestige through a balancing of their femininity and roles as women (including roles as mothers) against traits considered masculine such as competitiveness, and non-emotional decisiveness. This balancing act can require the splitting of different characteristics of the woman's roles into socially defined masculine and feminine compartments, with different combinations of characteristics called into service for different roles or identities. Yet this adaptation to the conflicts between the requirements of the masculine defined business world and the requirements of femininity is not without its consequences. Walkerdine (1990) notes, "for many women, the powerful part of themselves has been so split off as to feel that it belongs to someone else" (p. 134). This situation seems to have similarities to schizophrenia, which the *American Heritage Electronic Dictionary* (1992) defines as "A condition that results from the coexistence of disparate or antagonistic qualities, identities, or activities." Indeed, women who claim femininity and yet

appropriate masculine spaces and power for their own benefit by definition exhibit traits loosely considered schizophrenic. Women who reach beyond feminine gendered roles are incomprehensible, unreasonable and thus apparently mad, within patriarchal systems.

The cornerstone of patriarchal systems, the patriarchal nuclear family, founded in legal and religious contractual obligations, where a man works to materially support a woman who works within their mutual residence to care for their 2.5 children has eroded away. More women are willing to adapt and construct femininity to fit their own aspirations, and to risk being labeled eccentric, crazy, immoral, and much worse in order to secure for themselves as many masculine benefits as possible.

WOMEN'S ALIENATION FROM BODY/MIND AND SELF.

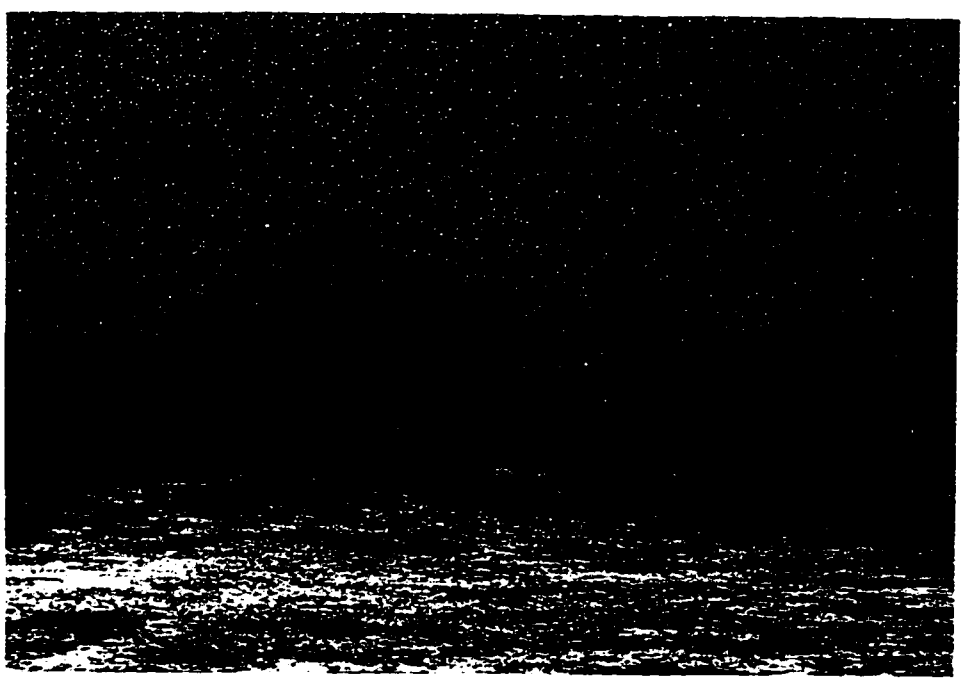

Figure 3.4

Reflections: April, 1996 - Baton Rouge

What else is a woman? What is a woman beyond that which is not-a-man? To be a woman is a fluid state, operating on different levels. On the social level, we may not be aware of the rules are dictated to us. Following the rules may not actually touch how we see ourselves as women. I participate in many "masculine" activities. I camp alone, photographing wildlife and wilderness landscapes. I worked for many years in the traditionally male position of Print Estimator. As an undergraduate at Clemson, I learned to weld. I loved graphic arts when women were just entering the program. I was the only woman in Woodshop and Electricity. i did not worry about being feminine. in fact, I was one of the boys. As one of the boys, I was treated in many ways as an equal, but i believe the men failed to see me as a "woman," especially as a potential sexual partner. The men might ask me how to operate the lathe in Metals shop, but it seemed they did not want to ask "one of the boys" out on a date. I split my images of the feminine. The aspects having to do with traditional femininity and sexuality were segregated from the aspects I used in my school program. Yet somehow, I came to see myself as a woman in the cross currents of social messages.

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The Body as Self-Representation

The presentation of the body is a form of public self-representation. Susan Bordo (1993b) notes:

> The body -- what we eat, how we dress, the daily rituals through which we attend to the body -- is a medium of

> culture. The body . . . is a powerful, symbolic form, a surface on which the central rules, hierarchies and even metaphysical commitments of a culture are inscribed and thus reinforced through the concrete language of the body. (p. 165)

The way I represented myself as an undergraduate -- the assertive use of initiative, the clothes which fitted rather than contested the masculine construction of vocational education, the technical knowledge I applied to successfully work in the masculine world of machines -- constructed my femininity in a way counter to prevailing norms. At the time, this was not an act of resistance. Instead, it was an escape from construction of the feminine, an alienation from myself and the overwhelming pressure to conform to femininity. Bordo (1993b) is correct in saying "(t)he body is not only a *text* of culture. it is also . . . a *practical,* direct locus of social control" (p. 165). I exhibited the process of splitting girls and women undergo which Walkerdine (1990) discusses. Masculine aspects of my behavior placed me as a peer to the men in my department. I received recognition, but the recognition was in part for my ability to adopt a masculine stance toward vocational education. In my private life I acted out a more traditional role of the feminine In my relationship to male lovers with whom I was non-assertive, silent, and compliant. The two representations of myself, both situated in a female body, created a tension between the what I saw as contradictory positions.

Rubin (1992) points out, "we never encounter the body unmediated by the meanings that cultures give to it" (p. 276). if meaning is made between the reader and the text, resulting in the

obliteration of the author, (Barthers, 1977; Foucault, 1977a), what then of the body of a woman, which as Bordo (1993b) has shown operates as a cultural text? Barthes (1977) calls writing " the destruction of every voice, every point of origin" (p. 142) where the body is banished. "Writing is the neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing" (Barthes, 1977 p. 142). This textural longing for disembodiment, posits the body, long gendered female, as a text which vanishes yet again from the scene.

Women's bodies serve as the focal point of social control and reveal much about what society believes about women. In her examination of anorexic women, Bordo (1993b) found that these women held a deep, is self-destructive, understanding of the position created for women in society. Through the contraction of the female body into a more masculine form and through self-control and denial of desire, these women seek to access masculine power through the denial of their female body. By following the construction of femininity to the letter of the messages carried in the various discourses surrounding women, anorexics reveal the misogyny behind the construction of femininity which all women are exposed to. Bordo (1993b) notes, "Anorexia represents one extreme on a continuum on which all women today find themselves, insofar as they are vulnerable, to one degree or another, to the requirements of the cultural construction of femininity" (p. 47). Women present their bodies as texts to be read in the context of femininity. The gaze of the reader

objectifies this textural body, just as any other text is objectified. Women's bodies as embodied text, again are displaced from their minds in the mind body dichotomy.

CONCLUSION

Autobiographical Recursions:

It has just occurred to me, with a somewhat sinking feeling, how I have constructed my own womanhood. In chapter three, in the Mother/Daughter connection portion, I wrote that my mother continues to see me as a young woman with her whole life ahead of her. Then I started to write that I was a woman in my forties, with graying hair, with a miscarriage and failed marriage behind me and coming to the end of my child bearing years.

In fact, this must be how I identify myself as a woman. I have internalized all the identity connections between woman and body, the need for a husband and children to feel fulfilled, and the sense of passivity in these situations -- I could not gain or maintain control of the situation in both the miscarriage or the divorce. I could only decide on my reactions. I construct myself, at least in language, as a failure, reaching an age when inevitable and final failure (child bearing) will take place. I wonder if this identity is what has been chasing me through my dreams night after night.

The image of the elk in the lake (Figure 3.1) evokes both the way I feel that I reflect those around me rather than being myself, and also the dream reflections of an identity which chases me in the night. The flight of birds in Figure 3.3 reflects my sense of fragmentation and not

fitting into the social situations which constitute my world, while the tree (Figure 3.4) symbolizes the self - in this case alienated and alone.

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The question remains: i am a woman by gendered social constructions. How is it I could become something other than a woman. As different as I feel my life is from the lives of many women, it is women i feel closest to. I can and have for years operated in spaces dominated by men, as an undergraduate in Vocational Education, teaching in a vocational high school, and in the printing industry. Indeed, i learned to fit in as one of the boys. But conversations and actions as one of the boys were always scripted in certain ways. As fluid as gender may be, it still is expressed and judged against the social standards of gender normalcy. The disciplining of the body may be subverted, but it cannot be escaped.

The mind/body dualism plays out in the gendered bodies of men and women. The fracturing of aspects of psyche, emotions, and physical activities to disguise women's participation in the masculine half of the dichotomy allows the patriarchy to continue its fantasy of woman as "other" to man, a reflection of man. Women become fractured in the process of adapting to the patriarchal demands of womanhood and personhood. Women's willingness to elude masculine definitions of femininity may appropriate male power, but if not done carefully, this appropriation may be seen as "inappropriate." Yet space for difference in gender construction is created as the powerful patriarchy is forced to adjust to new resistances to its power.

Can woman, linked as she is to the body and its biology, be said to exist apart from mind, despite the patriarchal conceptions of the dualism of mind/body. Perhaps not. Yet in the no-mans-land of mind-not mind, feminine gender becomes fluid, a river which is starting to overrun its banks. Gender become a self-representation created through the body, performed by the body. Appearance and behavior are constructs of gender, whether we are conscious of these constructions or not. The construction of gender forms perhaps the foundation of all other representation, including how we represent ourselves in autobiography. The language a woman uses to describe herself is influenced by how she sees herself in relation to the language society uses to describe women. A woman's use of language is often constricted by what is considered feminine and her willingness to undergo disapproval from others. Gender then becomes a language of the body, even the body in the act of writing.

NOTES

1 See Stone's (1994) edited volume *The Education Feminism Reader,* which contains essays dealing with education and patriarchy.

2 Obviously, changes are slow and vary from community to community. White, middle class heterosexual women enjoy many more choices then, for instance, lesbians or minority women in either the middle or working class.

3 I hesitate to use the word "identity" because of its ties to a singular, unified self. In emerging postmodernism, the fluidity and coagulation of often contradictory aspects of self can not quite be contained in the singular form identity. It might be more proper to refer to selves or identities.

4 Leviticus 18: 7-16 (NIV) is addressed to men and outlines what relationships are forbidden because they dishonor another man. it forbids a man to have sexual relations with his mother, step mother, sister, half sister, grand daughter, paternal aunt, maternal aunt,

daughter-in-law, or sister-in-law, specifically because this would dishonor the men who have rights in these women. It does not forbid relations with between a man and his daughter any more then it does a man with his wife. in that historical context, they were his property to do with as he pleased.

5 The patriarchal view of women as property is even more dramatically illustrated by the biblical story of Lot, who, when his male guests are threatened, offers his daughters to be raped by the men of Sodom (Gen. 19: 7,8) and the story of the Levite who faced with an almost identical situation in the town of Gibeah, hands his concubine over to the men of the town who gang rape her until she dies (Judges 19: 22-25). In both cases, it is clear from the text that Lot and the Levite both behaved in an acceptable manner; their right to dispose of the women is unquestioned and unquestionable.

6 Lerner (1986) traces the development of a hierarchy of value among women based on chastity and virginity with the chaste wives of the ruling class at the top and the publicly available prostitute and utterly oppressed slave woman at the bottom. This hierarchy remains in effect today. Prostitutes, women who gain direct economic benefit for sexual services, remain the utter outcasts of society – persecuted by the law while their middleclass male clients remain anonymous and unmolested (Lerner, 1986; Delacoste & Alexander, 1987). The hierarchy continues, with sexually active single women falling lower then married women. Among single women, poor women, especially minorities, with children are made the scapegoats of society, highlighting the role of both race and class within the patriarchal ranking (Polakow, 1993).

7 The story of Sodom, in which the guests are threatened with homosexual rape, became part of the original justification for severe anti-homosexual laws and tradition still in force today (Greenberg, 1988). David Greenburg (1988) argues that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was not for the homosexual orientation of the men, but for their threat of rape of the guests, among other things. As he notes, "to threaten a guest with rape was a particularly outrageous violation of hospitality norms" (p. 136). Greenberg goes on to note that the men apparently were not exclusive in their sexual orientation nor were they expected to be, since women were presented as a substitute victims and in the case of Gibeah, the substitution was acceptable.

8 The threat of violence in women's lives arises from many sources. In situations where men feel out of control and powerless, it is women who suffer through rape and domestic violence, crimes of power and control. This was tragically apparent after the Northridge earth quake in California in January, 1994. According to Melyssa Jo Kelly, coordinator of Santa Cruz's Commission for the Prevention of Violence

Against Women "Ten days after the earthquake we had an all-time high in rape calls . . . and there was a 300 percent increase in reports of sexual assault and domestic violence" (Gore, 1995, p.28).

9 Whitfield (1988), drawing on the work of several physiologists, identifies what he refers to as human needs. The list includes: "1. Survival, 2. Safety, 3. Touching, skin contact, 4. Attention, 5. Mirroring and echoing (validation of the infant including facial expression, posture, etc. which indicate to the infant it is understood)". The list contains 20 needs in all.

10 Flax (1990) provides an excellent comparison object relations theory and Lacanian theory, the two major post-Freudian theories.

11 in deconstructing the notion of self, postmodernism forfeits the right to name or define that self. Naming and defining are two of the primary powers of patriarchy (Lerner, 1986) which women have traditionally been denied access to. Thus the position of power through the use of language to name and define becomes slippery, literally slipping again through the fingers of women just as they reach to take it.

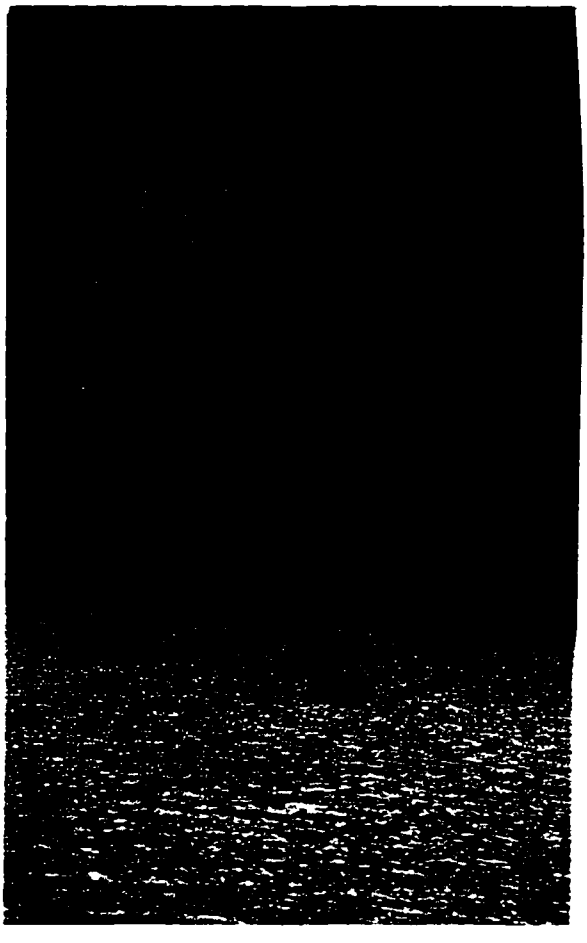
12 *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A critical dictionary* (Wright, 1992) defines Object relations theory as:

> A post-Freudian branch of psychoanalysis . . . that takes as its primary field of study the relation between mother and infant. . . . (it) assumes that from birth, the infant engages in formative relations with 'objects' – entities perceived as separate from the self, either whole persons or parts of the body (such as the breast), either existing in the external world or internalized as mental representation. (p. 284)

13 The young boy also experiences these relational aspects, but with less availability of the father and other male role models exhibiting these behaviors, he must abstract more of what the meaning of masculine is and comes to identify them as female characteristics which must be suppressed in order to become masculine. As Flax (1990) notes,

> in contemporary Western culture . . . the boy by age five will likely have repressed the "female" parts of himself, his memories of his earliest experience, and many relational capacities. He will have developed the "normal contempt" for women that is a fundamental part of male identity within male-dominant cultures. (p. 122).

IV / Fractured Images in a Wind Blown Lake: Culture / Nature in Women's Sexuality



Reflections: June, 1994

Slate Blue Night:

In search for meanings
within meanings,
a prism's scattered reflections
return to the origins of light.
Through the cycle of the moon,
the new illumines the stark night
laced with pilgrims.
You have not brought me here
as a hero would, as a savior.
You have not brought me here
at all.
You come
as one who is so alien
you could be a twin.
Reaching through shadows
of a slate blue night,
you weave scattered reflections
into dreams,
to touch me
as no lover has.

• • • • •

Figure 4.1

INTRODUCTION

Sexual Hierarchies

In the previous chapter, I explored the construction of gender identify and the effects of the mind/body dichotomy in self-representation. In this chapter I look at the construction of sexuality and the culture/nature dichotomy which helps fragment the

expression of sexuality and serves to limit women to heterosexuality and the destiny of their biological body. Rather than approaching sexuality as natural, in a dichotomy of natural sex versus socially constructed gender, I treat both gender and sexuality as equally constructed.

Sexuality, what Lingis (1985) calls "the passion of one body for another" (p. 1), forms an intricate dance of erotic relationships, fluid and temporally elastic. The dynamic social/psychological construction of sexuality is determined by neither gender nor the biological body exclusively. Rather, sexuality intersects the discourses of gender and the materiality of the body (Butler, 1993) so that "(e)rotic behavior is not just a commotion in one's anatomy; it is way of relating to others" (Lingis, 1985, p. x). As a cultural phenomena, produced and circulated through different discourses, Rubin (1992) notes, "(s)exuality is as much a human product as are diets, methods of transportation, systems of etiquette, forms of labor, types of entertainment, processes of production, and modes of oppression" (p. 277). The sexual categories of lesbian, straight, or bi-sexual are products of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Foucault, 1977c, Sedgwick, 1990). Sexual orientation or identity, interacting with gender identity, serves as the foundation for much of how women represent themselves in their every day lives. Yet gender and sexuality are rarely questioned.

Rather than a biological given, sexuality is constructed and acquired through the actions of a variety of discourses, such as religion, judicial, psychiatry, popular culture and political discourses. In

turn, these discourses set narrow limits of culturally sanctioned sexuality and sexual behavior (Rubin, 1992). A person's biological sex identity is assigned at birth based primarily on external genitalia[1] (Money, 1988). Having been assigned to the category of male or female, the baby is then assigned a corresponding gender[2] and sexuality. The categories sex and gender form the basis of two major axes of sexual difference which Simon Watney (1986) identifies as the axes of gender identity and object choice. The interplay of tension between how we see ourselves and who we choose as lovers, between gender identities and sexuality orientations, begins in the earliest relationships and continues throughout life.

Within Western culture, "normal" sex means heterosexuality, and sexuality itself is defined against discourses which script heterosexuality as normative. In her analyses the framework and hierarchy of sexual activity recognized by Western patriarchal heterosexual culture, Gayle Rubin (1992) notes that discourses of sexuality "delimit a very small portion of human sexual capacity as sanctifiable, safe, healthy, mature, legal, or politically correct" (p. 282). Other forms of erotic or sexual expression are "understood to be the work of the devil, dangerous, psychopathological, infantile, or politically reprehensible" (p. 282). Sexual exploration into non-reproductive desire and pleasure, whether heterosexual, lesbian, gay male, bisexual, or transsexual, from multiple partners to autoeroticism, from playing games to sadomasochism, are taboo and elicit reactions from disapproval to disgust.

Rubin (1992) notes, not unexpectedly, the hierarchical arrangement of sexuality privileges the heterosexual couple, duly married and established with children, one of whom is expected to be a boy to carry on the father's family name. Providing the couple avoids public or legal notice, they are free to express themselves sexually to the extent that their psyche allows them the freedom of choice. Unmarried heterosexual couples, particularly young adults, have almost the same freedom of sexual expression as married couples. Within a hierarchy of permitted behavior, these two forms of heterosexual behavior are followed by those who are ostracized for their sexual preferences. Sexually active young men involved with women, under the guise of "sowing their wild oats," face little actual criticism, though the young women may face harsh criticism, especially if she becomes pregnant. The further one is from the ideal of heterosexuality within marriage, the more ostracized one becomes (Rubin, 1992). A woman who presents herself as outside of the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990) makes a decision to withstand some level of ostracism.

Women's resistance to the heterosexual matrix finds a wide range of expression. A heterosexually married woman may refuse images of patriarchal power by declining to use the title of husband[3] for her partner, or a woman may choose to live a life not oriented towards men, whether through a vow of celibacy such as a nun makes, or through lesbian sexuality. Whatever form their resistance to phallocentrism takes, these women will be treated as deviant in some

way. They will be treated anywhere from odd to rebellious to dangerous, and these characterizations will set boundaries for their expressions of themselves. Finding a space for self-presentation will accordingly be limited by the consequences of these characterizations.

The Control of Women

At the end of the nineteenth century, the study of sexuality became the purview of the medical establishment, especially the newly emerging fields of psychoanalysis and psychiatry. The purpose of the research was to establish sexual norms and control sexual deviance in the name of mental health. (Foucault, 1978; Faderman, 1981). This movement towards psycho/medicalization of sexuality made previously invisible sexual attachments between women suspect. Through Victorian times close relationships between women were considered non-sexual romantic friendships. Faderman (1981) notes:

> Because it was thought unlikely that even their sensuality, which included kissing, caressing and fondling, would become genital, romantic friendships were permitted to articulate . . . their physical appreciation of each other. (p. 80)

Prior to the twentieth century, women were tightly constrained, especially before marriage, and often legally dependent on men for survival. One area in which women had relative freedom was in the enjoyment of women friends. Women of the upper classes especially had the free time and income to form and maintain a variety of friendships, creating a women's space (albeit, racially and class

segregated), free of the gaze and control of men. Friendship among women served as one of the few outlets for psychological frustration, especially among intellectually active women. So long as rules of gender, especially concerning dress, were followed and the partners were discreet, women with the financial means could manage their own relationships without interference from men (Faderman, 1981). But with the changing attitudes and definitions of sexuality at the end of the nineteenth century, as well as slow improvement in the economic and political status of women, this changed. As women began to encroach on the public sphere of men, men intensified their concern with the sexuality of women. Lesbian relationships became a focus of medicine in the name of science and social control. Faderman notes, "the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century sexologists who defined such love as a medical problem had something to do with the new views regarding these relationships" (p. 19). The fear of a new, exotic species of homosexual infiltrated women's relationships. All friendships held sexual potential.

With the advent of the twentieth century, the field of psychology united with historical patriarchal traditions to construct views of female sexuality which denied much of history of homosexuality in favor of the dominant culture's self-serving definitions and rules governing sexuality and deviance. Thus, the social construction of homosexuality has become fraught with metaphors of disease and danger, of religious moral upheaval and the disintegration of society itself. Juxtaposed to this is the operation of both male and female homosocial organization

(Sedgwick, 1985), which presupposes an attraction within each sex while strenuously disavowing such attraction.

WOMEN AND NATURE.

Figure 4.2

Reflections: June, 1995 - driving between the Dakotas and Wisconsin:

I am tied socially to and objectified through my body. Women's experience of the female body is different from men's experiences of the male body. I will spend one quarter of my life between puberty and menopause, bleeding from my uterus. Yet this is rarely discussed. Menstruation seems mysterious to men and it is rarely mentioned in their presence. Women rarely discuss their periods among themselves. It is treated as either a medical symptom, like a monthly bout of flu, or as a source of humor, as women laugh off the chaotic emotional states attributed to "that time of month". it seems difficult to deal with this biological activity, so laden with social meanings and constructions.

Yet managing women's menstrual cycles is a multi-million dollar business. Thousands are employed. Fortunes are built on that monthly flow and its concealment.

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The Trade of Women

Though associated with the body in the mind/body dichotomy, women do not have free agency with regards to their bodies. Many factors contribute to linking women's destiny to "natural" body processes such as pregnancy and birth. Centuries of fear of surrounding reproductive processes, the lack of birth control, and the needs of lactating women contributed to the division of labor between male and female. Historically, the inferential nature of paternity and the patriarchal tracing of family lines through the male lead to political activities of forming alliances and gaining territory through the exchange of women in marriage (Rubin, 1975; Lévi-Strauss, 1969). Women became the conduit of the power of the phallus from one generation of men to the next (Rubin 1975). These different factors were under girded by the teachings of religion, which translated the womb envy of men into a usurpation of feminine powers (Chesler, 1978; Lerner, 1986) and reified woman's position as the reproducer and caretaker of children.

The inferential nature of paternity and the political importance of family alliances led men to be concerned with controlling the sexual lives of women, so that particular men maintained the power to reproduce through the women of high status families. Certain criteria

were established by families for the marriages of their daughters. A woman had to live within the established rules to maintain her connection to status , foremost among these rules being that she engage in sex only with the man to whom she was assigned. To better establish this control, the sexuality of women became strictly delineated. The only purpose of sex for "proper" women was to have children and it became unnatural for high status women to enjoy sex -- indeed disinterest in sex became a hallmark of the well bred woman. Only "low bred" or "loose" women would have children when not connected through legal contracts to the children's father and these children would remain illegitimate in the eyes of the law unless the father chose to claim them. Only women who practiced some form of prostitution were supposed to behave with passion, enjoy sex, or engage in non-reproductive sexual exploration. Men could do what they liked so long as it was with women, but women must only do what men legitimated for them (Lerner, 1986; Chesler, 1978).

Fluid Sexuality

The variety of human sexual expression is limited only by the imagination and courage of the participants. The availability of effective birth control coupled with women's growing economic and political independence opened the possibility of women gaining more control of their sexuality. Yet the main discourses of sexuality remain centered on the conflation of gender with sex with heterosexuality in the attempts to restrict the possible intended and constructed meanings of sexuality to the dualism of male/female. With

heterosexuality established as normative, all other sexualities are defined as perversions or sexual pathologies (Weeks, 1991). Sexuality is constructed just as gender is, not conflated with gender and what is constructed is a text from which meaning is created.

The dichotomous terms of heterosexuality and homosexuality carry unequal meanings. The term "homosexual" is problematic in its focus on the sexual and its failure to accommodate non-sexual aspects of same-sex relations, especially the emotional aspects. Nor does the term adequately address people who consider themselves gay but, for what ever reasons, are not in gay relationships. The problems with the popular construction of the meaning of homosexuality is illustrated in an article discussing the media coverage of a recent University of Chicago study of sexual behavior (cited in GLADD/SFBA, 1994, p. 25) . The coverage referred to homosexual as "active" while never referring to the activeness of heterosexuals. Thus,

> Heterosexuality is something you are. Homosexuality is just something you do. Homophobic "change ministries" thrive on this distinction, always reducing homosexual orientation to genital activity (because then a homosexual person only has to be "inactive" in order to be "cured". (GLADD/SFBA, 1994, p. 25)

This type of bias, operating in a society which places sexuality and gender as the central defining characteristic of the individual (Foucault, 1978), renders invisible the complexity of identity by reducing the person to one aspect of their sexual expression, failing to encompass the diversity of same-sex relations.

The Culture of (Homo) Sexuality.

Reflections: November 28, 1994 - Baton Rouge

An observation: Americans, despite their protestations to the opposite, appear to view gay[4] sex as more "natural" than straight sex. In fact, heterosexuality appears to require a great deal of training and coercion in order to institute. Otherwise why would the mere presence of a person who enjoys a same sex relationship be viewed as such a temptation to young and old alike? Why does the mention of gay sexuality carry the power to initiate experimentation? Why is there a need for both the blatant and subtle use of heterosexuality in print and visual media of all types to keep it in active use? Indeed, why does the developing child require protection from the knowledge that heterosexuality is a choice? How did this strange set of circumstances concerning the unnatural use of heterosexuality come to be? Perhaps, at some point in the past it was deemed necessary to overcome natural inclinations to promote what at the time seemed to be the common good or benefit. Or perhaps there was just a copyist's mistake in the ancient manuscripts.

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Almost every aspect of American life is organized based on the possession or absence of a uterus. Everything from the width of the brim of a hat to the tools allowed to be used to make a living are delineated by this biological difference and the power relation instituted around it. Though in the last few years, more brave souls have openly crossed gender lines, much of gender structure is constructed

to establish segregated homosocial[5] environments, both male and female, where people operate beyond the realm of the opposite sex. Though this would seem to be a recognition that homosexuality is a normal and healthy expression of sexuality, the opposite is true. Homosocial relationships, especially among men, are steeped in homophobic attitudes (Sedgwick, 1985).

American society seems obsessed with homosexuality, and large segments have developed a pathological phobia towards its expression in any form, or at least any form they define. Thus, as Eve Sedgwick (1991) notes, activities involving "male bonding" between heterosexual men also involve a high level of fear and hatred of homosexuality. Football players can pat each other on the rump and shower together, but only in the confines of the playing field and locker room. In other situations this is seen as deviant, not because the behavior has changed but because the social interpretation of it has changed. "Deviance," David Greenberg (1988) points out "is in the eye of the beholder. It is beliefs that homosexuality is evil, sick, or undesirable--and the corresponding efforts to punish, cure, or prevent it--that make homosexuality deviant" (p. 2). The basic component of deviance, just as in gender and sexuality, is its social constructedness. The social reaction to individual expressions of gender, sexuality and deviance from heterosexuality expressed as homophobia, are bound into all aspects of society and, as Sedgwick (1991) comments,

> the homophobia directed against both males and females is not arbitrary or gratuitous, but tightly knit into the texture of family, gender, age, class, and race relations. Our society could not cease to be

> homophobic and have its economic and political structures remain unchanged. (p. 465)

Gayle Rubin (1975) notes: "the incest taboo presupposes a prior, less articulate taboo on homosexuality. A prohibition against *some* heterosexual unions assumes a taboo against *non*-heterosexual unions" (p. 180, emphasis in original). Theories that treat heterosexuality as the norm, expend energy explaining homosexuality's deviation from the norm.

Psychoanalytic theories have sometimes presented a complex process of development into a presumed heterosexual orientation, with homosexuality an undesirable, though not unexpected, development (Freud, 1933/1949; Winnicott 1960/1986; Chodorow, 1978). Individuals break these neat rules of development reach all types of sexual and gender orientations, which society has defined as deviant and unnatural. Homosexuality, bisexuality, heterosexual and homosexual transgenerational attraction (indeed also orientation to the inanimate) all transgress the smooth process laid out in the theories and are treated as problematic, rather than alternate outcomes of a complex, possibly non-linear, process.

Enforced heterosexuality has become embedded in Western culture and tradition. Since the late nineteenth century the control of deviancy, including in sexuality, has increasingly obsessed medical, legal, educational and religious institutions. In the late nineteenth century the increased medicalization of human behavior, including sexuality, resulted in the creation of categories of people based on what up to that time had been seen as particular behavior, rather than

an identity. The result was first an explosion of sexual categories (Sedgwick, 1990; Foucault, 1978) which then conflated into two categories with the creation of the homosexual, "preceding . . . even the word 'heterosexual'" (Sedgwick, 1990, p. 2) as a category. As Foucault (1978) explains:

> The nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form . . . . Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. It was everywhere present in him: at the root of all his actions . . . written immodestly on his face and body because it was a secret that always gave itself away. (p. 43)

This reification of a particular set of legally deviant behaviors into a category of person fed expansion in the legal and medical professions to deal with the formerly invisible (née, non-existent), but now obvious problems devolving from the homosexual. "The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (Foucault, 1978, p.43). This creation of a new type of human allowed the emergence of control in ways formerly unimagined. Particularly, it allowed the newly emerging field of psychology and psychoanalysis to carve niches for themselves by instituting regimes for "helping" the recalcitrant homosexual, and other deviants, such as the newly created addict, adjust to social norms, to be well-adjusted to the normative pressures of culture.

Defying the Patriarchy

The language of gender in the dominant discourse is limited to the standard dichotomy of masculine and feminine. Within the gay and

lesbian communities, a whole different and more diverse language has grown up – butch, femme, dyke, queen and numerous variations. The appropriation of the use of the opposite sex pronouns, such as the use of her or she to refer to particular gay men disconcerts communication between the gay/lesbian communities and the main discourses. Dominant discourses attempt to maintain control of language so that knowledge is constructed in certain ways. Despite the varied and rich imagery of the resisting discourse, until its own language migrates into the larger vocabulary, it remains marginalized.

By constructing representations which are at odds with the language of the dominant discourses of sexuality, women can redefine themselves in defiance of the patriarchy. Lesbian sexuality creates such deviance by avoiding the marriage contract with men. But the definitions of lesbian is as contested as the definition of woman itself. In the heterosexual discourses, lesbianism (and gayness) is a refusal of the "natural," which is at the base of the heterosexual contract as well as the organic dichotomy of life and death. Sue Ellen Case (1994), examining the connection between vampire and lesbian images, notes, "Life/death becomes the binary of the 'natural' limits of Being: the organic is natural. in contrast, the queer has been historically constituted as unnatural. Queer desire, as unnatural, breaks with this life/death binary of Being through same-sex desire" (p.3). To defy the patriarchy means to represent one's self in a way which claims the position of other, outside with the agency of self definition of sexuality. Women's social arrangements as part of the lesbian continuum (Rich,

1986a) is a place where agency can be created away from the watchful eye of the patriarchy.

Outside the Boundaries

Reflections: May, 1996 - Baton Rouge

Sunday afternoon we were sitting in CC's coffee shop chatting over her cup of Colombian coffee and my English Breakfast tea. She had seen a woman in New Orleans for the third time. I had just met a black man, ten years my junior, from a small town near St. Gabriel. Her mother and aunt, both in their late 70s, were living together again, using her as the referee. My sister, a dutiful daughter, has my mom visiting for a week. I have difficulties with family visits. The talk drifted onto books we had read, her end of semester papers and my chapter on sexuality.

She stopped me in mid-sentence. "I just want to be clear on this. Your sister is a nun and you read Lesbian S & M."

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In representing herself and her desires, a woman is caught between cultural images of women, even feminist images, and her own erotic images of desire. in the case of sexuality considered perverse, to come to accept and value one's sexuality includes the task of creating a strong belief in one's self in the face of cultural distaste, abhorrence and rejection.

The presence of aggression, competition, violence and pain in the activities of men is an accepted part of American culture. Hockey, football, and boxing are all examples of eroticized homosocial male

activities, replete with sexualized language, behavior and structured contact in competition for physical and psychological dominance, in which the participation in pain and danger for pleasure is highly rewarded. The participation of women in activities, from the military to high contact sports, which involve pain and danger for pleasure is not similarly valued.

While there are numerous sexual activities which are considered perversions, one of the most vilified are those involving sadomasochism. Sadomasochism (S & M) between lesbians challenges some of the most dearly held beliefs about women, held not only by the conservatives but by feminist theorists who promote women as less aggressive and violent, and more connected to the maternal than men (Cixous, 1975/1991; Gilligan, 1982). Somehow it is incongruous to imagine the Earth Goddess using a riding crop on her lover.

My own assumptions about the peaceful nature of women was challenged one May in the Tattered Cover Bookstore in Denver. While perusing the Lesbian studies section, I came across the title *Macho Sluts* (1988), by Pat Califia. Intrigued by the title, I bought the book and so was introduced to the world of lesbian outlaw sexualities where good girls and bad girls seemed to have their wires crossed. What was most disturbing was the way the book challenged my assumptions about the nature of women. Until then, I had naively assumed that women were less violent than men, that stress and violent conditions drove women to violence and that, given the choice and appropriate

circumstances, women would prefer a peaceful existence. I held these beliefs chiefly in regard to world, national and local peace and justice, with the underlying hope that if women were given the chance, we could make the world more safe and peaceful than had men. The reality of lesbian S & M inalterably changed those beliefs.

The existence of Lesbian S & M has created controversy within the feminist community. The right to the consumption of pornography as well as to participate in S & M scenes is a volatile issue, forcing feminists to examine beliefs about who will be included in the movement (Califia, 1988; Rubin, 1994). Those outside the circle of practitioners see S & M sexuality as undermining the struggles by feminists against oppression (Bartky, 1990). The existence of S & M has been theorized as everything from unresolved pre-oedipal and oedipal issues (Benjamin, 1988) to mental illness to weak moral fiber (Rubin, 1992; Bartky, 1990). Those who claim sexual outlaw status defend their right to sexual agency and control of their bodies (Califia, 1988), a basic feminist tenant. The right to consensual participation in the exploration of sexual desires is especially controlled through censorship of pornography. Noting that S & M pornography for lesbian consumption is a small market, Pat Califia criticizes anti-censorship feminists for abandoning Lesbian S & M in the fight against censorship. Califia (1988) comments,

> "Feminist erotica" that presents a simplistic view of lesbian sex as two women in love in a bed who embody all the good things the patriarchy is trying to destroy isn't very sexy. This stuff reads as if it were written by dutiful daughters who are trying to persuade Mom that lesbian sex isn't dirty, and we really are good girls, after all. (p. 13)

The difficulty with attempting to eradicate any perversion, including S & M, on the grounds of either political, social welfare, or psychological health is that perversion defies meaningful definitions. An unresolvable paradox lies in the viewing of particular behaviors expressed through particular means as destructive, while other behaviors with similar outcomes are sanctioned.

GENDERED SPACE AND SEXUALIZED LANDSCAPES.

Qualified Representations

David Bell and Gill Valentine (1995) note that "sexual identities are constructed and performed across space" (p. 30). The space in which sexual identity can be performed is constrained by social conventions of male and female which do not allow for the existence of others which might disrupt these categories. Thus, for me, lesbian S & M was rendered invisible and absent from my categorization of female sexuality because I had not conceived of a space for its existence. But the converse is also true. I had not conceived of a space for its existence, because it is rendered invisible through censorship in many bookstores in the South. Certain types of erotic material is sold in bookstores which service the general public while others are not. Thus, Anne Rice's (1990) *The Claiming of Sleeping Beauty*, which is a fantasy of heterosexual S & M (with dashes of homosexual S & M) is available in bookstores where Califia's books are not available. Only when I was confronted with Califia (1994) as a self described sexual-outlaw and writer of lesbian S & M fiction that lesbian S & M came to exist in my world. Her thoughtful essays on AIDS and lesbian health further

challenged my categorization of pornography writers. It is through such constricting of space, restricting of the places where representations can be public, which creates invisibility.

Invisibility is not only a problem for lesbian sexual outlaws. The space in which all women may represent themselves as different from socially defined, heterosexual norms is constrained. A woman represents gender and sexuality through an intermixing of a myriad of factors which come together in interactive relationship between representation of the self and cuiturally expectations imposed on such representations. Heterosexuality, the assumed standard, is imposed (Rich, 1986a) and deviation from heterosexuality is scrutinized, at times to be vilified, at times to be tolerated. Those who live outside heterosexual boundaries make conscious decisions about their self-representation and its consequences to personal safety and freedom. Eve Sedgwick (1993) points out, beyond the gay and lesbian community, homosexuality is not encouraged or valued. I am assumed to be heterosexual, not because of distinct evidence of male lovers or relationships but because I don't show evidence of a lesbian attraction to women. Other types of sexuality, while undeniable, are seen as alternate expressions of the heterosexual dichotomy and categorized with homosexuality as deviant.

A woman representations of herself both to herself and to those around her becomes a complex negotiation between her particularities and the expectations of the group or community in which she is interacting. Particular spaces are gendered in particular

ways – military bases, sports, department stores. The inscription of gender in places invariably involve particular conceptions of heterosexual relations between men and women. While sexuality is not reducible to gender, they are intricately intertwined, structuring the interpretation of behavior and appearance along particular lines. Women's division between their self-perceptions of gender and sexuality, and the expectations of the discourses in which women operate place women in the position of performing their gender and sexuality constructions. The gendered and sexualized spaces in which they operate become stage sets against which women perform.

The Mime of Femininity

Constructed by and through the male gaze[6], femininity and female sexuality becomes performance (Butler, 1990). The feminine traits of empathy, caretaking, passivity and self-denial along with requirements of visual beauty combine to be express femininity in a quiet, emotive stance through the regimes of beauty and feminine body language. This silent gender performance bears remarkable similarities to pantomime, defined as "communication by means of gesture and facial expression" (American Heritage, 1992). A woman's representation of gender and sexuality becomes a performance of gesture and facial expressions used to convey particular messages in a system of communication which constrains feminine speech and activity in favor of the masculine. This patriarchal system also defines feminine as the absence, or lack, of masculine traits (Riviere, 1929/1986; Butler, 1990; Lacan, 1975/1982). Yet masculine traits (and

feminine traits) are themselves cultural constructions which change over time. Thus a woman competing with men in business negotiates between the necessary traits of competitiveness and aggression, considered masculine, and the feminine traits of acquiescence and cooperation. The pantomime-like performance of femininity can serve as a mask for the active position the woman is maintaining. This is not to say that as pantomime, a woman's femininity is not authentic for her. Rather it is a style of communicating particular representations of that femininity.

The term masquerade, drawn from psychoanalysis, is also applied to the performative nature of women's sexuality and gender, especially in the presence of men. Joan Riviere (1929/1986) first used the term masquerade to denote the way that women in traditional male spheres, such as in business, science or academics, "may put on a mask of womanliness to avert anxiety and the retribution feared from men" (p.35). Masquerade indicates the constructed nature of both gender and sexuality and is artificial imposition. In psychoanalysis masquerade hides femininity's desire for a penis in traditional Freudian psychoanalysis (Riviere 1929/1986), or lack of the phallus in Lacanian psychoanalysis (Lacan, 1975/1982; Butler, 1990). This construction of woman as lack requires masking the lack so woman will appear as the phallus which she cannot have[7] . Butler notes this incongruity of these substitutions, where "a substitution is required, no doubt, because women are said not 'to have'" (Butler, 1990, p. 46). Critics of the construction of woman as an incomplete or lacking male suffering

from penis envy note that a much more direct and reasonable explanation desire of women to hold positions of men is the desirability of the male position of power and privilege. To this end, women perform femininity and sexuality as a strategy to gain access to the privileged male position. This is not an act of deception by women. Riviere (1929/1986) notes, there is no difference between "genuine womanliness and masquerade . . . they are the same thing" (38).

This not to say the masquerade can be dropped easily or completely. From earliest days, passive and restrained behavior in girls is reinforced while activity is reinforced in boys (Walkerdine, 1990; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Girls learn to be "good girls" and "dutiful daughters." Yet the construction of the masquerade is intricately played out through particularities of the individual and situation. A dutiful daughter may carry out her role by following a traditional feminine tracks, or she might fulfill her father's ambitions for a career of his choice (see, for example, Robertson, 1990, p.73).

What a woman presents and what a man sees may be two different things entirely. He may project his own meanings and subconscious desires onto the woman, unable to see anything beyond his own discursive formation of gender and sexuality, centered upon himself for which a woman becomes a mirror. In fact, part of her masquerade is to mirror patriarchal construction of woman, to become that which man is not. For the masculine heterosexual hierarchy to be secure, the feminine is required to remain static. But the very definition of femininity has always been in flux, changing from

group to group and decade to decade. In the nineteenth century upper middle-class Victorian women achieved levels of independence by maintaining particular images of femininity. Many of these women traveled the world, but maintained their femininity in their adherence to dress codes (Robertson, 1990; Ingemanson, 1993). Robertson (1990) notes, in 1883, Rose Pender "rode and hiked up Pikes Peak (Colorado) in an long chintz skirt, and one imagines, it did not occur to her to wear anything else" (p. xii). The Harbinson sisters, two of the earliest single women to homestead in the Colorado Rockies, "always wore long skirts, which, though they dragged in the manure, showed that their owners were ladies" (p. 82). By complying with the requirements of the male gaze for appearances, these women were able to engage in camping and living off the land which disrupted establish feminine roles.

Neutered Spaces

The wilderness is one place which is gendered according to the male gaze. Elementary schools are another place strongly structured along gender lines. Educational discourses and school policy lay down strict controls on the expression (or non-expression) of sexuality. In the discourses of educational institutions teachers are constructed to appear as neutered as mothers -- having and expressing no desires of their own, erotic or otherwise. Yet teachers are also expected to teach and enforce gender and heterosexual codes of behavior and appearance, while avoiding teaching about sexuality and gender directly. The particularities of each child's gender and sexual

constructions gained in her or his family and local communities of neighborhood, religious institutions and such, begins to be channeled to fit more uniform expectations of the school.

The construction within schools of particular gender and sexual expectations have been inscribed in the teacher no less than the students, first through years of elementary, middle, and secondary schooling. The codes of appropriate and inappropriate behavior for teachers are further reinforced by the conceptions of the roles of teachers learned through higher education, rules and guidelines of school boards, the curriculum and text-books, and the expectations of individual and groups of school constituents – parents, school board, politicians, text book publishers, and other special interest groups. It is important to remember that, except for mothers, the groups and individuals who define and enforce the sexual constructions of teachers (and students) are predominantly male, while elementary teachers are predominated female. Elementary schools are a venue which appear to be a female space, but in fact, are scrutinized closely by males in whose interest it is to maintain the heterosexual status quo.

CONCLUSION

Autobiographical Recursions:

This chapter has been the most difficult to write. I tried to get a handle on the construction of my own sexuality through the work, but I repeatedly distracted myself. My internalized taboos against talking about sexuality held sway. I struggled between my realization of the constructed nature of sexuality and what Rich (1986) refers to as

"compulsory heterosexuality." The canoe with three women beneath a glacier (Figure 4.1) expresses for me the sense of vast complexity and multiple identities that can be present in sexuality construction. Hedged round with taboo and repression, sexuality and the body are perhaps the most fragmented portions of my life. They are certainly the hardest for me to represent.

The first coyote (Figure 4.2) I photographed long ago came to be an image of myself. She (for what else could she be with that smile) represents my wish to be wild, to escape the strictures of the body into the freedom of nature -- all modernist conceptions of course. My desire to escape usually plays itself out as an escape into the mind. I often feel I have lost touch with my body and my sexuality. In the coyote I see another possible avenue of escape, one that connects to my body and myself rather than divides it between the mind and body.

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If woman is an object of man's gaze, created out of his gaze, then who exists in the woman's body apart from the male gaze? What is woman -- an age-old question, but the question of philosophers and other men, not necessarily of women. Women may ask who they are in relation to men. But the questions they ask themselves may be completely different. Drawing on Derrida, Spivak (1983) discusses the double displacement of woman, both as an object of man's gaze and desire and as an enactment of his constructions. Is it possible to stand aside of those constructions?

The construction of sexuality is one of the most restrictive aspects of our society. The control of women's sexuality is paramount in a patriarchal system if patrimony is to be maintained. The fear of the invasion of sexual territory, either by other men or by women, is a great threat to heterosexual men, while the fear of invasion of the body, of seeming like a woman and enjoying it, forms part of homophobia. These patriarchal fears project into the lives of women in many ways.

The relationships of women, which stretches across all aspects of women's community, reflect the ways women have been socialized into the body. Women never abandon completely the psychological relationship with the mother, even if they are heterosexual. Thus they are able to maintain with out contradictions a variety of different relationships with women, including sexualized, if not actually sexual relationships.

In the next chapter, I explore ways women may represent themselves and their gendered and sexualized roles through the use of images. Through photography, a woman may explore her boundaries and what limits exist to those performances. She might also create new performances for herself.

NOTES

1 Variations, whether are at the chromosomal level or anatomical level, such as hermaphroditism, are treated as medical problems and are corrected surgically and with hormone treatment (Money, 1988).

2 Butler (1990) shows that the category of sex, normally viewed as a natural given, is in fact a cultural construction as is the category of gender. She notes that the "concept of sex-as-matter, sex-as-instrument-of-cuitural-signification is a discursive formation that acts a naturalized foundation for the nature/culture distinction and the

strategies of domination (it) supports" (p.37) in which nature is figured as female as well as in need of the development of culture. Thus the designation of sex is political.

3 The title husband has links back to other, proprietary meanings of husband and husbandry. One definition in *The American Heritage Electronic Dictionary* (1992) of husband is "a manager or steward," while husbandry is defined as "The act or practice of . . . breeding and raising livestock." Both meanings place the woman as a resource to be managed, in the same sense that cattle are managed for the benefit of the farmer.

4 The use of gay to designate all same sex relations obviously is problematic. I will follow Sedgwick's (1990) example. As she says, "There is . . . no satisfactory rule for choosing between the usages `homosexual' and `gay,' outside of a post Stonewall context where `gay' must be preferable since it is the explicit choice of a large number of people to whom it refers" (p. 16). I agree with her that the use of "homosexual," while sounding more gender neutral, carries also with it the garb of sounding official, as well as clinically diagnostic. Of course there is the additional problem of lack of differentiation between gay and lesbian with the unitary use of gay. Sedgwick points out the problems of self-identification with the word lesbian which further complicates gay/lesbian identities and politics: "there are women-loving women who think of themselves as lesbians but not as gay, and others who think of themselves as gay women but not as lesbians" (p. 17). This paper deals more with men and homophobia against them, so I use the word gay to refer to all same-sex relations unless there is a need to be a differentiation between male and female.

5 Eve Sedgwick (1990) develops the idea of homosocial, placing it on a continuum with homosexual. It refers to the ways in which men or women form social bonds to promote their own interests. Sedgwick goes beyond this though in examining it in terms of desire, even when it is manifest in the form of hostility. Indeed, in American society, male homosocial behavior is often also homophobic, disrupting and making invisible the continuum.

6 It is only after women reach an age where men lose sexual interest (The age of a man's mother when he was a child, as Phyllis Chesler (1978) notes) do women somewhat escape the direct male gaze. If she wishes to remain attractive to men, i.e. under the male gaze, she must increase her efforts to ward off the effects of aging in order to appear younger than she is.

7 In Lacanian theory, women are the phallus, a state of being, but they do not possess the phallus. Men possess the phallus, but can not

be the phallus. Thus for man, woman must have the appearance as the phallus which "gets substituted for the 'having' so as to . . . mask its lack" (Lacan, 1975/1982).

V / Light Writing Experience: Visualizing Autobiography

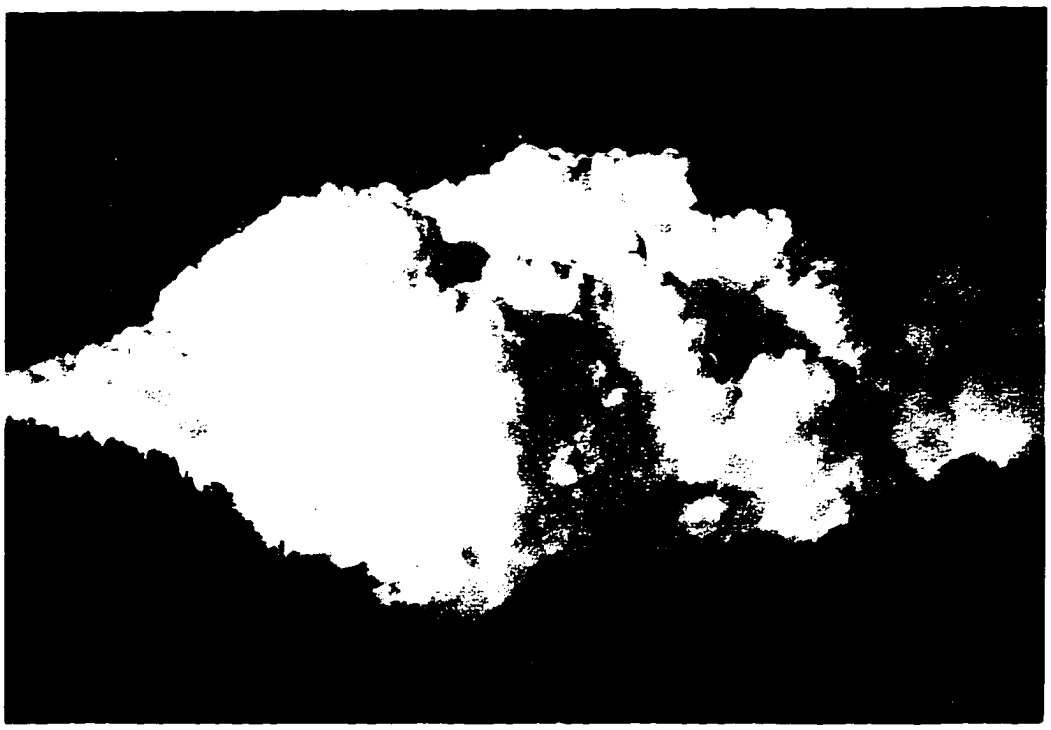

Figure 5.1

Journal: May 24, 1995 - Custer, South Dakota

In Colorado this morning, I woke to snow. I bumped my head on the tent and a drift of it slid down the side. My sleepy mind thought small ground squirrels had climbed up between the tent and the rain fly and were falling off. Enough was enough. I broke camp to move to a lower elevation in South Dakota. In Lusk, Wyoming I was confronted with the astonishing sight of a cow at the gas pump. It was stretched out on a flatbed trailer, a blue tarp covering it like a blanket as if it were cold – an immense, but dead, black Angus. It was incongruous rather than repulsive, its eyes calm, its mouth caught in a perpetual lowing, its

large split hooves sticking straight out. It was more like a statue laying on its side. Ranchers live in a different context, in a different relationship to life (especially their food), than city dwellers.

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INTRODUCTION

Emerging Representations

One reason to rethink self-representation is to find ways to make the invisible visible and to understand the concrete relationship between the past and its present. The goal is not to reach a final point of self-perfection for the individual. Rather, the goal is to better understand the interactive process in which who we are emerges, shifts and percolates continually out of our past, like a spring flowing down a mountain. This spring of the self has neither a defined goal nor a definite end, except perhaps the end of life (what ever life and its end may be). We who have received the first gift of Prometheus (fire being the second)[1] can not see the outcome of our lives or who we will be in that future. Who we are emerges out of experiences and the effects of social contingencies. We make decisions, pursue or reject relationships, and reach imperfect understandings based on incomplete information. Maxine Greene (1995) says it succinctly when she writes, "There are always vacancies: there are always roads not taken, vistas not acknowledged. The search must be ongoing; the end can never be quite known" (p. 15). Autobiographical work can be focused specifically on attempting to see and hear the absences -- both of visions and voices, our own and others.

Negotiating the interactions and contradictions of the gender, race, and class of a pluralistic self requires dexterity and determination. Even with insight, it is easy to fall back into the patriarchal agenda of perfecting the individualistic, universal self, and of meeting the stated and unstated expectations of the discourses of society through self-disciplining without questioning those discourses. Autobiographical work may serve to reproduce society's desire for docile bodies through the construction of truth about the self in particular ways (Foucault, 1977c, 1978). Leigh Gilmore (1994b) draws on Foucault as she examines the self-policing of truth as it conditions the way women represent themselves and the continued influence of the original connection of confession to autobiographical writing. The interactive production of truth becomes evident as truth is created in the interchange between the individual and institutions or discourses which have the power to delineate what constitutes truth. The author and the reader are "enjoined in a mutually productive performance of truth telling. Their mutual performance locates a cultural and discursive site of truth production in relation to the disciplinary boundary of punishment" (Gilmore, 1994b, p. 68). The language available for autobiography is patriarchal and, as such, sets the conventions of what is able to be spoken as truth by and about a woman. If she is to be believed, and thus heard, by her reader, a woman must negotiate between her need to tell her story in her own way and the possible forms her self-representation may take to be treated as believable within the culture.

The very act of seeking understanding can feed into the discourses of oppression which are rampant. My perception of my femininity, in which I see myself as an outsider, feeds both a sense of independence and competence in traditionally masculine activities, and a sense of inadequacy when i compare myself to other women. Added to this are the effects of racial and ethnic background, class beliefs and age and health. Construction of what it means to be a woman living in the late twentieth century interacts with social prescriptions of femininity to create an ambiguous relationship among the different aspects, or selves, which make-up this body-psyche.

Traditional forms of self-representation for women create contradictions between a woman's visions of herself and the representation she reveals to the world. These contradictions arise because autobiographic forms are rooted in the masculinist forms of the universal, public self and the patriarchal dichotomous constructions such as homosexual/heterosexual, masculine/feminine, and public/private spheres. Written autobiographical accounts constructed in a language which is itself patriarchal raise issues of the availability and acceptability of a language which women can effectively use as they challenge the flexibility and uses of the genres of self-representation.

In this chapter I explore how photography might be combined with written text to produce autobiographical work which reveals more of the complexities of the self than a written text alone. I am interested in finding a language which can allow imagistic and non-

verbal aspects of the self to be expressed. Photography operates as second language with its own structure and metaphors. In a culture which values textual literacy above other forms of communication, I believe it is important to find ways to express what can not be written. As a woman metaphorically linked to the inexpressible and the unconscious, i am interested in ways to express the inexpressible and hidden complexities of the pluralistic self. i examine the work of three photographers in addition to my own work to show different ways to approach self-representation through photography. Just as there are multiple subject positions from which to construct self-representation, there are a variety of ways to approach photography and the self-representation of the subject in autobiography.

Contradictory Visions

The influences of visual mediums, such as journals, magazines, television, film, and now the internet via home and school computers, on thought and construction of the meaning of the world can not be over-estimated. The influence of popular culture and the effect of the patriarchal gaze on identity has long been discussed (see for instance Bordo 1989, 1993b; Lutz & Collins, 1993, 1994; Solomon-Godeau, 1986). There is an important visual component in identity and therefore self-representation. Failure to examine how our gaze is formed and influenced will leave unchallenged the seeming transparency of how the world of others coincides with our perceptions of that world.

Two popular magazines have had an important influence on how i construct the world visually. *Life Magazine* and *National Geographic*

Magazine have shaped what in the environment I see as aesthetically pleasing, what I value about particular places and people, and how I look on minority and immigrant neighborhoods and material cultural influences. This visual influence shows up in the way I frame photographs, what I consider interesting or valuable to photograph, and what fails to draw my notice. They have also influenced my own gender and sexual constructions and how I view others around me, especially women of other cultures.

Social views of women have an immense visual component. As objects of the male gaze, women are constructed through or against their body. No matter the individual woman's wishes, she has to take into account the insidious power of the male gaze in how she is seen and sees herself. The gaze can not be removed through denial or rhetoric. But among other things, the gaze can be met, returned and a female gaze, turned elsewhere, can be developed into resistance.

It is necessary to employ and utilize photography critically since it is a traditional tool for objectifying people, especially women. Photographs are especially prone to be accepted at face value, yet contain many layers of meaning. Yet photography can create a space for vision, a space which correlates to finding voice. Photographs construct particular interpretations of the visual spectrum of light[2] as well as interpretations of lived experiences. No matter how ephemeral, they provide a vision of self, and as Mark Freeman (1993) notes, "even if my 'self', fleeting as it is, does not exist apart from my own consciousness of it, from my own narrative imagination, indeed

from my own *belief* in its very existence, it is nonetheless eminently real and – within limits – eminently knowable" (p. 13, emphasis in original). Alone or in combination with more traditional forms of autobiographical writing, photography offers an opportunity to bring different perspectives to bear on the conceptions of self.

MULTIPLE VIEWS AND CREATIVE IMAGININGS

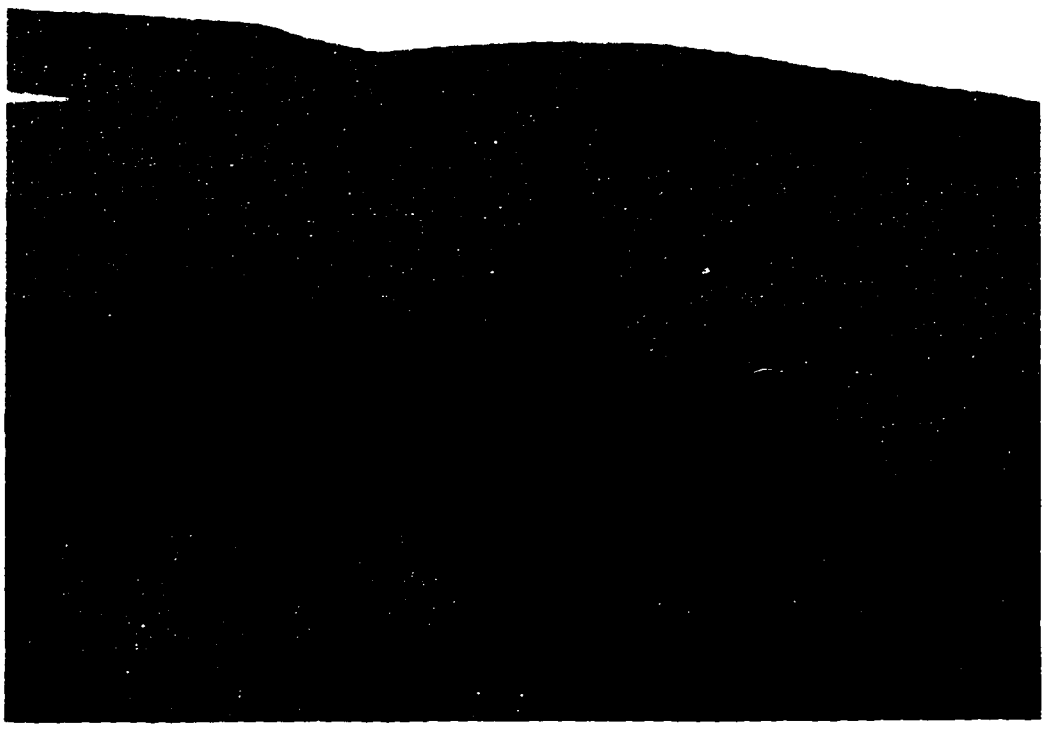

Figure 5.2

Reflections: July, 1993 - Victoria Canada

(Reflections on Ursula Le Guin's (1985) *Always Coming Home,* which is about people who "might be going to have lived a long long time from now in Northern California" (p. ix))

Le Guin is Pandora, but I do not think Pandora is the ethnographer. I see Pandora as young – in her early twenties. The archivist tells

Pandora the valley is not a Utopia but a mere dream, dreamed by a middle-aged housewife. If Pandora was the dreamer, surely she would know. Of course, if Le Guin can travel forward in time through dreams where the inhabitants of that world are aware of her dreaming them into existence, there is nothing to stop her from being in the future at two different ages – a young Pandora and a middle-aged ethnographer. But the ethnographer does not share Pandora's idealism about this future. She has no illusions of the valley being a Utopia as she describes all the disease, war, and infant death. She and Pandora seem to be different people with different experiences, for all that they may share the same DNA. So Le Guin of the twentieth century acts as interpreter of the hopes of a young woman and the dreams of a middle-aged woman in a future that might have happened, where all three of them are the same woman.

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Multiple Subject Positions

Ursula Le Guin's (1985) explorations of possible worlds in *Always Coming Home* provides an example of the pluralistic constructions and multiple roles which form our concept of self. Le Guin places herself as observer, standing next to the reader, occasionally commenting to the reader about this future culture. But as observer she holds two positions at once – one as the recording ethnographer, and one as Pandora, a young woman who finds her way into the valley. Similarly, a woman may express different selves at any given time – as daughter, student, teacher, business woman. These positions

are not mutually exclusive, but neither are they necessarily inclusive. Often they involve different positions within a hierarchy of power relations. A female student is subordinate to her instructors, but as a business woman she may exercise power over others. Adding to the complexity are the tacit power relations between men and women in any given place. The relationship between these different selves is continually reworked, as one is brought to the fore and another recedes. Bringing these different, at times conflicting roles, together requires negotiation of the constructions of both one's self-images and societies images of the different roles. To bring change to this fluid mixture of selves requires a degree of imagination to envision different possibilities.

In creating and exploring self-representation, imagination is perhaps the most important aspect of the work. Maxine Greene (1995) notes, "of all our cognitive capacities, imagination is the one that permits us to give credence to alternative realities. It allows us to break with the taken for granted, to set aside familiar distinctions and definitions" (p. 3). Rethinking identity and self-representation requires looking at realities which at first may not be visible. Taken for granted beliefs may create alienation within a woman's internalized beliefs as well as impact her relationships with others. In my own case, it is most difficult to remain aware that my transient childhood as the daughter of an Airforce officer has shaped my views of a status hierarchy, personal relationships within that hierarchy, and my ability to relate to and trust others.

Imagination and Self-representation

The power of imagination in self-representation lies in creating other perspectives of a woman as an individual and in community. imagination can tap the richness of multiple perspectives held both by the woman herself and others around her. Though not addressed directly to issues of self-representation, Greene (1995) strikes at the heart of the importance of imaginatively rethinking self-representation:

> (E)ach person's reality must be understood to be interpreted experience -- and . . . the mode of interpretation depends on his or her situation and location in the world. It depends as well on the number of vantage points a person is able or enabled to take -- the number of perspectives that will disclose multiple aspects of a contingent (not a self-existent) world. . . . It is to see beyond what the imaginer has called normal or "common-sensible" and to carve out new orders in experience. Doing so, a person may become freed to glimpse what might be, to form notions of what should be and what is not yet. And the same person may, at the same time, remain in touch with what presumably *is*. (p. 19, emphasis in original)

Attempting to understand other's realities, for Greene, carries an impetus for social change based on an empathy developed through the capacity of imagination. By understanding another's reality, we bring to bear imaginative interpretation of the situations and perspectives of others. Greene acknowledges the limiting actions of complex social constructions of the world as she notes the multiple vantage points we are able to hold and, more critically, *enabled* to hold. I would argue that to accomplish this understanding, to gain this insight, we first need some understanding of our own contexts, situations and locations.

It is through our own experiences that we will finally come to the realization that the world is contingent and socially constructed, albeit by powerful discourses of discipline (Foucault, 1977c) interacting with the individual and community. Through the interaction of the imagination of self and social pressures on self, identity is formed. Paul Jay (1994) notes:

> Identity, then, is always the result of a complex interaction between cultural forces and what we call the private imagination, but the line between the two seems impossible to draw. There surely is a real sense in which we choose or imagine our identities, but those choices are always mediated by culturally conditioned possibilities that work to circumscribe what we can imagine for ourselves. (p. 209).

The complex arrangement of social expectations, history and language constrains a person's attitudes and beliefs. This in turn, limits the ways identity can be imagined. But an awareness of limited perspectives can form points of resistance where new perspectives may be sought, with varying degrees of depth. It takes effort to change old habits of thought and comprehend another's experiences. Yet as we form connections with others, we have an opportunity to widen our own experiences and identity.

Individual contingency and the limits of understanding become apparent when we meet others with vastly different experiences. I have a strong interest in the different Native American tribes and the effects that Western cultures have had on native cultures. Yet, despite my having completed a historical study of the Navajo culture while working on my masters degree, I was unprepared for the what I learned when I took a tour of the Navajo nation's National Park at

Monument Valley, Arizona. The tour was lead by a Navajo man who answered our questions about his culture. The valley is red desert with towering rock formations looming over sparse vegetation. This harsh, arid land is sacred to the Navajo nation. The tour included visiting an older, non-English speaking woman's hogan[3], where she both lived and earned a living by demonstrating weaving for the entertainment of tourists. Her sons and grandsons hauled her water several miles by truck because she lived in a remote part of the desert. It is through imagination, drawing on clues from the people, their social and physical environment, and most importantly, their stories that I gained some understanding of their attachments to the land, the interweaving of every aspect of their life with spiritual meanings, and their valuing of human relationships above the valuing of time and money.

This is where the romanticism left off and the complexity of the modern Navajo nation became evident. The tour van passed under a conveyor which ran beside the road and up a mountain for several miles. This is part of a strip mining operation which serves as a major source of income for the tribe. Year by year mining is reducing the mountain to rubble which is then sold to finance infrastructure of the modern Navajo tribe – roads, schools, law-enforcement. The image of any native tribe mining their land is at odds with the images of the noble savage clinging to a dying culture. In fact, the Navajo culture is not dying. Rather, like all cultures, it is changing in response to neighboring cultures, including the technologically based Anglo-American culture.

Another incongruity on the tour was at a stop at wide vista of the valley and rock formations stretching out into the distance. In the foreground, two young girls, perhaps eight and ten, beautifully dressed in traditional clothes were earning money by posing for the tourists. Native peoples have been the objects of tourist's photographs since the nineteenth-century and now counter this exploitation somewhat by charging for the privilege of using their images. These girls, or at least their family, were aware of the Western preference for beautiful, romanticized females - in this case cute little girls. While it fed into the objectification of the gaze, it also capitalized this objectification to the financial benefit of the family.

The romantic images of native peoples which fuels the imagination of non-natives, including myself, had to be adapted to account for the incongruities brought on by living in a technological society. Through imagination, I begin to integrate that understanding into my understanding of myself and my situations. As Jay (1994) notes, "Imagination is contained in -- and contained by -- the remembered image, which lends to the imagination its very form and makes it peculiar, or specific to the self" (p. 203).

At this point it might be important to remind ourselves that if all that was necessary to bring about a just, peaceful world was looking at ourselves and others differently, this would have taken place centuries ago. Maxine Greene makes the point that it is equally possible to imagine the oppression of others and the self-aggrandizement of one's self and group. The bombers of the Federal Building in Oklahoma

City imagined both the world they wanted to create and the means to reach that goal. They took the measures they thought necessary to bring that imagined world into existence. While the world they want to create was a fantasy, it required imagination. If imagination is to escape becoming entangled with destructive and fanatical dreams of power, it requires a link to a critical examination of moral issues. if autobiographical work is to be freed from narcissistic self-justification and to instead be used to provide a means of improving the community of relationships we live within, then it to must consciously act, as Greene (1995) notes, "to form notions of what should be" while remaining "in touch with what presumably is" (p. 19). Imaginatively constructing possibilities, even if these possibilities can not be immediately implemented, opens a space where a person may move towards "what is not yet."

Self-Representation of Three Photographers

The link between photography and self-representation takes many forms. As an art form, photography is self-representation of the artist. But this connection is not limited to the production of art. I would like to discuss the work of three photographers whose work exemplifies the links between photography and self-representation, even where self-representation is not the goal of the photographer. I have chosen Margaret Bourke-White[4], Jo Spence, and Jim Hubbard for their different approaches to representation. Each uses photographic representation for cultural criticism, and through cultural critique, reveal how they position and represent themselves in the

world. Each has exerted a different influence on my thinking about photography and representation.

Margaret Bourke-White was one of the original four photographers on the staff of *Life Magazine*'s first issue in November, 1936 and she worked with the magazine as both a staff photographer and free-lance photographer until her retirement in 1971 (Silverman, 1983). She influences my work through her approach to photography and her attitudes as a woman working in a masculine field. She realized early the potential for photography and photojournalism to make visible that which others might prefer to remain invisible. Her work shows a deep concern for those who are victimized, whether through poverty or through bigotry and war. She set the precedence for allowing female photojournalists to accept the same dangers as their male colleagues.

Jo Spence was a British free-lance photographer who experimented with photography as a tool to examine issues surrounding the lives of women, especially working class women (Spence, 1986). Her work surrounding the creation of visual myths influences my own use of photographs as metaphorical symbolism. I am particularly interested in her approaches to reading traditional family photographs and her use of photography to confront the objectification of the body and of women of different classes and cultures.

Jim Hubbard is a former UPI staff photographer whose concern for homeless people, especially children, led to his becoming a

photography teacher at a homeless shelter (Paley, 1995). My approach to the use of photography in autobiography is similar to his desire to allow people to construct and express their own perspectives of their lives. His work directly with school children serves as an example of the possibilities of applications of photography in teacher education.

The work and philosophy of these three photographers illustrates the different connections possible between photography and self-representation. Yet their work also raises issues surrounding liberal beliefs about the easing of oppression by simply making it visible. At times the work of all three operates to colonize the lives of oppressed or disenfranchised people for the viewing interests of museum participants and readers. I am most interested in the issues raised by tensions in the work and lives of these three photographers .

Margaret Bourke-White

Margaret Bourke-White began as a commercial photographer in 1927 in Cleveland, Ohio in architectural and industrial photography. She moved into photojournalism in 1929, working for *Fortune Magazine*. In 1936 she joined the staff of the new *Life Magazine*. She later became a full time free-lance photographer, though *Life* continued to be her major outlet. She is perhaps best known for her photographs taken as a war correspondent for *Life,* and for her book length photo-essays on the such topics as the effect of the depression on people living in poverty in the American South, titled *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937) done with Erskin Caldwell, and the fall of Hitler's

Germany, titled *Dear Fatherland, Rest Quietly* (1947). Her work on Russia and India also brought her renown (Bourke-White, 1963; Silverman, 1983).

For Bourke-White, photojournalism was not simply taking pictures of an assigned topic or for an assigned story. She saw photography as an expression of the person taking the photograph. Her work as a photojournalist was a way to share what she saw, experienced, and learned on an assignment:

> I know of nothing to equal the happy expectancy of finding something new, something unguessed in advance, something only you would find, because as well as being a photographer, you were a certain kind of human being, and you would react to something all others might walk by. Another photographer might make pictures just as fine, but they would be different. Only you would come with just that particular mental and emotional experience to perceive just the telling thing for that particular story, and capture it on a slice of film gelatin. (Bourke-White, 1963, p. 142-43)

Just as a written article reflects the style and basic beliefs of a writer, a photo-essay reflects who the photographer is as a person. Bourke-White's concern for people caught in circumstances beyond their control -- poverty, drought, war -- shows in her photographs where she tried to present what she considered the human side of the story. As a pioneer of photojournalism, she worked in a period which Alfred Eisenstaedt of *Life* referred to as "a great era in photography" (Eisenstaedt, 1983, p. 7). Her attitude towards the power of photography and towards her assignments reflect both the historical period from the 1920s through the 1950s and her feelings about the people she photographed.

Bourke-White had a fascination with technology and a belief in its ability to solve all problems. As a photographer, she claims the right and ability to tell the truth with the camera. Indeed, this truth telling is for her a felt responsibility. Though her early work focused on industrial photography, as assignments carried her away from her studio she became concerned with telling the truth of the struggles of people. Bourke-White (1963) makes note of this change which occurred during her coverage of the Dust Bowl drought in 1934: "(W)hen I was discovering the beauty of industrial shapes, people were only incidental to me. . . . But suddenly it was the people who counted. . . . Here were faces engraved with the very paralysis of despair. These were faces I could not pass by" (p. 110). Here we see the photographer's claim of the right to photograph even people in their misery, a claim to power which has increased in proportion today.

Photographers' claims of a right to photograph any situation is actually a appropriation of the power to objectify and colonize others. This power to colonize and objectify people in any circumstance is a manifestation of the gaze, and indicates photography's masculinist construction as a detached and "objective" recorder of truth. In Bourke-White's work this power is wielded in order to make the invisible visible. Her concern with recording the lives of the poor blossomed into a focus on stories of the pawns of power such as the common airmen, soldiers, doctors and nurses in World War II, and the Hindu and Muslim refugees of India displaced when their leaders divided India into the countries of India and Pakistan.

This role as detached recorder was not unproblematic for Bourke-White. The camera provided a distance, an emotional separation from her subjects which allowed her to dislocate herself from their pain when she was working. While covering World War II in Europe, Bourke-White was photographing the dead in a recently bombed building. A woman rushed up and began weeping over the body of her daughter. "Her desperate moans penetrated even my protective shell, and as I focused my camera on the vision of human misery it seemed heartless to turn her suffering into a photograph. But war is war and it has to be recorded" (Bourke-White quoted in Silverman, 1983, p. 112). Here is the quintessential masculine construction of the gaze and its right to objectify others, this time in the name of an "objective" truth (war is war) which has to be recorded. Yet Bourke-White could not maintain her emotional separation completely, as professionalism dictated. She wrote of these pictures, "I was surprised to find that I could not bring myself to look at the films. I had to have someone else handle and sort them for me" (Bourke-White quoted in Silverman, 1983, p. 112). The masculine position of detachment and unemotional response was, and remains, an aspect of photojournalism. Bourke-White accepted this as an aspect of professionalism without question even when she could not master the unemotional stance which was dictated to her.

Bourke-White's photographs exemplify her belief that photographs reflect the beliefs and personality of the photographer. One such photograph is a picture of Stalin's mother, taken in 1932.

Bourke-White chose to frame the picture as a close-up, with only the woman's traditional head scarf framing the quiet face (Bourke-White, 1963). Her framing and positioning creates a intimate, sympathetic image which serves as a reminder that those who commit atrocities, such as Joseph Stalin, also have families and relationships. They are not as different from us as we might hope.

When Bourke-White wrote her autobiography, she followed the textual dictates of the genre. She used very few photographs, and these as only illustrations to the stories she told. The stories were told as a series of adventures which focused on the people she met in her very public life as a photographer. She breaks with this focus on the life she led in the public sphere to devote an entire chapter to her house in Connecticut where she returned from assignments to write. Though she married twice, she had no children. Speaking of the life she might have led with children, Bourke-White (1963) comments, "Mine is a life into which marriage doesn't fit very well. If I had had children, I would have charted a widely different life, drawn creative inspiration from them, and shaped my work to them. Perhaps I would have worked on children's books, rather than going to wars" (p. 308). Here we see the powerful effects of the social construction which links women primarily to the body and motherhood. A woman without children may successfully participate with men in the dangerous world of journalism, but if she has children, then her life will focus on the children. Bourke-White's male colleagues did not have to concern themselves with the decision of whether or not to have children. Indeed, it would have

been unprofessional to let family matters enter into their job decisions. Life insurance was expected to take care of the main social role assigned to men in the family.

We are fortunate that Bourke-White made the decision to forgo having children. Some of Bourke-White's most important work occurred when she recorded events at the Buchenwald Concentration Camp which she entered with the American division which liberated it. Her photographs in particular capture the horror of the camp and the almost impassive response of the citizens of Weimar forced to view what they had allowed to take place. Rather than focusing on the enormity of the carnage, she focuses on the individuals most involved and affected. The dead are treated with simplicity – the horror is neither exaggerated, nor minimized. The faces of the living – victims and town people – are near enough to see into their eyes. The faces are not so different from each other, nor are they different from those of European decent reading *Life* in the United States. Rather then focusing on the masculinist images of power, struggle and triumph in war, she provides a more feminized focus on the relationships at play in the situation. Here again, photography objectifies on one level but on another it keeps visible events and relationships which would otherwise sink from sight. These photographs also reflect Bourke-Whites moral commitment to record on film and make public the struggles and hardships of those who are least visible in society.

Jo Spence

In recent years, an interest has developed in using photography more directly in autobiographical work to explore the situations of people's lives. Jo Spence was particularly interested in ways the merging of photography with autobiography could be used by women. Her early work dealt with the way women are constructed through the patriarchal gaze. This work developed into using photography as a tool in therapy to create images of internalized beliefs about parents and self identity. In all her work, her underlying focus was to understand how social discourses surrounding family, work, law and medicine constitutes women (Spence, 1986, 1995).

Jo Spence began her adult life as a secretary rather than a photographer. Her desire to learn photography led her to work as an assistant to a commercial photographer from whom she learned the business. After opening her own studio, she became interested in the way she and her portrait subjects constructed representations. In her photographic autobiography, *Putting Myself in the Picture*, Spence (1986) comments, "I was becoming more and more intrigued by my ability to produce visual myths" (p. 40). She became a political activist, using photography to explore oppression, classism and racism. In the 1980s, her work focused on identity, subjectivity, and mental and physical health and it is this work for which she is best known(Spence, 1995).

Spence did life history work with a twist. She began exploring the contradictions between her lived experiences and the lives recorded

in her family photo albums. Noting that the photos of herself from childhood onward did not record her health problems, difficulties in school, or reveal any of the struggles she had with her parents and relationships with employers or others. "Those 'happy', 'serious' 'loving', 'miserable', but always passive visual moments which do exist, those moments which only show surface information about me, give no indication at all of the wider social, economic and political histories of our disgusting class-divided society. . . . (F)amilies . . . are encouraged only to photograph their leisure, their consumption, or their ownership and to show the 'harmony' of their lives" (1986, p. 83) Spence's life work focused on deconstructing the "family album" to find what lays psychologically and socially beneath the surface.

Spence (1986), through casting her autobiography in photographs, explores the use of photography by women as a means of critically examining the contexts of their identities. While she draws on pictures of herself taken by others, she relies primarily on pictures she has taken through out her life, especially those taken in the exploration of various feminist themes. She does not so much tell us what particular events happened, but what is not shown in the photographs -- her jealousy of her brother, the struggles as a working class child of unionist parents, her growing dissatisfaction with her role in the objectification of photographic subjects.

Ultimately, Spence developed the use of autobiographical photography as an aspect of therapy. Using costumes, she worked to recreate childhood memories of people and events as well as the

emotions which were felt as a child. Photographing the reenactment provides a concrete visualization of a memory to compare to the memory itself. This distancing allows for examining the internalized beliefs about parents and how those affect the person in the present. This concretization and distancing seems to allow women especially to separate from internalized images of their mothers and to see both their mothers and themselves as whole people, apart from the roles of motherhood (Spence, 1986).

The most important aspect of Spence's work is her exploration of the body as a social construction in photographs. The surface of the body becomes a ground on which are imprinted race most noticeably, but as importantly, class and gender and the oppressions which these bring about. All of these aspects of the body come into play in the photographic frame through the pose. People are so strongly indoctrinated into presenting themselves in particular ways that they will automatically assume the 'appropriate pose' without instruction from the photographer. Thus, women posing with their children will strike poses in which the child is centered and the mother is focused on the child (Spence, 1986). The myth of nurturance and self-sacrifice shows through.

Spence's presentation of her autobiography as the development of photographic critique provides a space for others to question their construction through visual images. Sidone Smith (1993) notes that Spence's work shows how "photographic practices hold the subject in specific bodily postures since . . . to be posed is to be composed. And

to pose is to do the ideological work of one's culture, both to exert power and to reproduce the dominant power structures" (p. 147). Women especially are vulnerable to visually compose themselves in response to social composition because of they are socially constructed as objects for the male gaze, whether that gaze is immediate or postponed through the photograph. Spence has shown that one aspect of autobiography can be to explore how we are composed through photography. This awareness opens the possibility of de-composing the social construction of appearances to allow us to re-compose our identities ourselves.

Jim Hubbard

Jim Hubbard is another person who uses photography in autobiographical work, in this case with minority and marginalized children (Hubbard, 1994; Paley, 1995). Disgusted with the invisibility of the homeless in Washington D. C. during the Reagan administration, Hubbard began documenting the lives of homeless people. The interest the children showed in taking pictures led him to teach homeless children basic photographic techniques, provide them with cameras, and allow them to record their visions of life. His ultimate purpose was to forge links between the children's struggles in poverty and his own advocacy concerns for homeless people through a major exhibit of the children' photographs (Paley, 1995). Hubbard established the Shooting Back foundation and produced a series of books of photographs taken by the children with whom he and the foundation work. *Shooting Back: A Photographic View of Life by Homeless*

Children (Hubbard, 1991) deals with his original focus on homeless children in urban areas. The work of the foundation has expanded to include marginalized children in other areas of society. *Shooting Back from the Reservation* (Hubbard, 1994) features Native American children on the reservations of the west (Hubbard, 1994).

The Shooting Back project provides children living in poverty and who are homeless a focus and a way to speak in their present situations. Nicholas Paley (1995) notes that the goal of a joint project of Shooting Back and the Children's Museum of Boston was to provide "the opportunity for children and adults to develop a deeper awareness of issues related to identity, ethnicity, and racism in contemporary America, and the opportunity for children to define and develop their articulations of these issues from their own perspectives" (Paley, 1995, p. 120). The issues of race and poverty play out against a visual field. People and communities are judged by their appearances, and the appearances of poverty are at variance with the dominant middle-class standards which judges respectability, honesty, industriousness by appearances of financial prosperity.

The success of the Shooting Back program illustrates the desire and need of people caught in the invisibility of poverty to be heard and seen. Through the photographs, the children can begin to represent their lives and the lives of their communities first to themselves and then to a wider public. Hubbard has provided a means for these children to develop their artistic creativity and a public forum through which their lives and creativity may be seen by

those outside their community. In an interview with Paley (1995), Tomeka Atkinson, a nine year old Shooting Back participant, was asked what she would like to say "to the people of Washington, or to the President" with her photographs. She responded

> I would take a picture of Shaw (the neighborhood) and my school because today somebody got shot in front of my school, and we were getting into a van and the person fell to the ground. . . . I would like to make a point that I don't like violence. That the surroundings are too dangerous. (quoted in Paley, 1995, p. 126)

This nine year old has been provided an opportunity which most children do not have -- to publicly express herself, to define herself in particular ways. Photography becomes a way of expressing aspects of herself which contest the stereotypes of minority and homeless people.

While developed to give children living in poverty a voice or vision, the Shooting Back project also developed out of Jim Hubbard's laudable political agenda of raising awareness of poverty and homelessness. The work of children becomes the vehicle to meet this agenda. Yet this work also serves to objectify and construct the children as other to those who attend museum shows and buy photographic books produced by the Shooting Back foundation -- typically not poor working-class minorities. Indeed, Paley's 1995) question to Tameka Atkinson about saying something "to the people of Washington" (p. 127) carries the hidden message that her community, which is well aware of the poverty and violence plaguing poor neighborhoods, is not included among the people living in the nation's capital.

A second important issue is the ethics of using of photography for exhibition, by children (or anyone, for that matter) without compensation for their work, no matter how worthy the cause. In a 1993 interview with three former Shooting Back students, Paley received less than glowing accolades. Dion Johnson for the Shooting Back program commented:

> (S)ay when I was at Shooting Back . . I bring Daniel off the street in my program. . . . so that stops him from selling (drugs), but that doesn't give him money to help out his family to put food on the table. So when he's finished my program, I go home at night, he's probably still on that street corner selling drugs. . . . So like all this, "I'm going to teach you this, I'm going to teach you that . . . ." But Jim, he was like selling our pictures for two-hundred-fifty and stuff like that. . . . Wasn't giving us no kind of cut. . . . Saving us from the drugs and all that. That ain't nothing but wasting our time. When we could be making money. (Dion Johnson quoted in Paley, 1995, p. 150)

Care needs to be taken to differentiate the work of people exploring identity issues to better understand their situations, and how they are constructed in the society, from the commodification of that autobiographic work for public consumption. Despite these problems, Shooting Back has proved immensely popular and worthwhile to those involved. It continues to grow and expand, allowing creative expression to people who would otherwise remain invisible (Paley, 1995; Hubbard, 1994).

Both Spence and Hubbard are exemplars of Maxine Greene's call for imagination to be used to work towards social change. Through photography, each provides amateur photographers with the means to find expression of their worlds, both the world of memory

and the present. Both seek to expose the inequalities suffered by people at the margins of society, while giving them a creative means of overcoming, at least temporarily, the invisibility they suffer. Through photography, different views and perspectives of those on the margins are revealed.

ETHNOGRAPHY OF MULTIPLE SELVES

Figure 5.3

Autobiography and Ethnography

Subjectivity and the construction of self and identity have become slippery ground for women and other marginalized people to negotiate. Despite the poststructuralist dismantling of the concept of a unified self , many feminists note that women still need to find their own identities, their own sense of self. This is not to say there is a universal,

totalizing identity encompassing all women. But neither does it mean women should abandon the concept of woman or of self (or more properly, selves) simply because these have been shown to be social constructions. Autobiographical strategies are needed to support the forefronting of the multivoiced, pluralistic self and the ambiguities and contradictions with which women deal.

Just as Ursula Le Guin (1985) uses fictional ethnography as a mode to see into and present the world of Pandora, ethnography might serve autobiography as a way to break open the chronological logic of conventional narrative to present the complexities of a life through a variety of texts and images. Ethnography might serve as a pattern to consider the pluralistic self which does not fit into the neat linearity of a unified self. Ethnography deals with the cultural formations and ambiguities between different aspects of a community at a particular time without assuming either the conditions or interpretations of the conditions are fixed. Likewise, autobiographical work requires an awareness of the fluid conditions surrounding existing and emerging identities, and the affect of context on the interpretations of experience. Just as a culture changes across time, often in unpredictable and unexpected ways, so does an individual. Searching for differences and connections between the roles and identities in one's own life can open a space to create accounts of the serendipitous effects of our own and others actions and experiences.

Ethnography draws on many forms of representation to gain an understanding of its subject. These forms of representation stretch

from the traditional written texts and photography as a record of a culture to the newly emerging role of poetics in the ethnographic report (Clifford, 1986a; Geertz, 1988; Richardson 1994). Additionally, all forms of the plastic and kinetic arts, from drawings to dance, are incorporated into the ethnography to provide as rich a representation of a people as possible. It is this richness which would benefit autobiographic work normally limited to only the written word. Expanding self-representation to include visual and poetic aspects of experience will enrich autobiographic work by providing different perspectives into the aspects or identities revealed through imagery and objects.

Ethnography of Others

Before examining more closely the links between autobiography and ethnography, I would like to first examine ethnography itself. James Spradley and David McCurdy (1984) identify the mission of ethnography: "to understand other cultures and to communicate that understanding" (p. vii). This is not a simple goal. The explosion of postmodernism onto the world scene, with its multitude of voices and perspectives, has left the definition of culture as contested a space as the definition of 'self'. Under the affect of postmodernism, the unitary picture of a culture is displaced by a more divergent and contingent view. Culture is seen "as composed of seriously contested codes and representations. . . . (where) the poetic and the political are inseparable . . . science is in, not above, historical and linguistic processes (and) . . . the writing of cultural descriptions is properly

experimental" (Clifford, 1986a, p. 2). Culture[5] is dynamic and interactive in the relationships among people and change is brought about in complex ways through relational interactions.

The contemporary ethnographer, just as the contemporary autobiographer, is finding more diverse strategies to present the fragmented nature of the work of representing different cultures. Rather than the traditional monologue of the ethnographer, a more dialogical form is emerging (Tyler, 1986). Focus is placed on the relational aspects of the process -- not only of the ethnographer and the group being studied, but of the reader of the ethnography also -- acknowledging that "ethnographies emerge out of a relationship among the traditions of ethnographer, group, and intended audience" (Agar, 1986, p. 19). The documents are becoming multivoiced. informants' comments and interpretations are being published with those of the ethnographer (Clifford, 1986a; Tyler, 1986; Marcus, 1986). The affects of the history and culture of the ethnographer on the creation and editing of the text is acknowledged. In many ways the ethnographer functions as an author in the literary sense, though the document remains a report of research. Geertz (1988) notes that at times "ethnographies tend to look at least as much like romances as they do like lab reports" (p. 8). An excellent example of this are the first lines of Robert Brightman's ethnography which could be the beginning of a novel:

> The trees around the trapline shack were shrouded with animal remains. Skulls, antlers, and cloth packages of smaller bones hung from the trunk and branches, suspended with twine and leather thongs. The skinned

> carcasses of otters and martens were ranged along the limbs, frozen and twisted so that their naked heads faced the river. (Brightman, 1993, p. 1)

This style is far removed from the traditional tenet which holds that ethnographic writing becomes tainted with self-absorption if the writer is obvious in the incorporation of literary style (Geertz, 1988). Ethnographies which incorporate literary style begin to resemble the narrative of autobiographies.

When either ethnographers or autobiographers adopt a more poetic approach to their subjects, (rather than attempting to remain rigidly objective), the images and interpretations created are more aesthetic. The construction of aesthetic, affective interpretations of the subject decreases the distance between the writer and subject, what Miles Richardson (1994) refers to as a "sense of estrangement" (p. 79). Drawing the reader into a more emotional awareness of the subject attempts to overcome the "alienation" (p. 80) of the writer as well as the reader. it is an attempt to reveal the passionate, complex life which flows under the objective facts and tallies of events and objects. The incorporation of aesthetic passion in either an ethnography or autobiography is a way of connecting or reconnecting to the vitality of the nonunitary subject.

Ethnography of Selves

If self is pluralistic, subjectivity contingent, and the individual a cultural construction then perhaps one approach to the exploration of a life is as culture of selves. An autobiography might serve as an ethnography of selves. One approach to autobiographical work is to

look at the different, sometimes contradictory aspects of oneself. A person can seek to understand the different aspects of subjectivity and identity through autobiographical and self-representational work. . Understanding one's own subjectivity and agency can provide an important perspective on one's situatedness which is constructed through an interaction of the individual and society. Just as with an ethnography, when the autobiography is complete, a distance is created between the subject and author which can allow for a more honest appraisal of the different aspects at play. The various creative elements which make up the text may be reread and reinterpreted at a distance and over time.

Those who record the experiences of life become hampered by language. Converting experience into a written account loses the vitality of the lived experience. Ethnographers realize, as Miles Richardson (1990) notes, "the sweat, the joy, the ecstasy disappear in . . . the ethnographic report. People whom they have come to know so well . . . become . . . nameless others, separated by the passive voice . . . from both the ethnographer and reader" (p. 1). This desire to restore the vitality of the field experience has led ethnographers to write in a more literary style, and to compose poetry based on their ethnographic experience (Geertz, 1988; Richardson, 1994). I believe autobiographers learn from ethnographer's experimentation with the genre of reporting on lived experience.

Drawing on postmodernism, Tyler (1986) calls the discourse of ethnography "evocation," which "presents no objects and represents

none, yet . . . makes available through absence what can be conceived but not presented" (p. 123). In other words, ethnography is poetic. Tyler explains, "Ethnography is . . . poetry . . . in its return to the original context and function of poetry, which, by means of its performative break with everyday speech, evoked memories of the *ethos* of the community and thereby provoked hearers to act ethically" (p. 125). Cultures are presented through an ethnography and this representation the building of connections between cultures of the informants and readers. This is also one of the aims of autobiographic work as the author tries to present the complex nature of the pluralistic subject. The autobiographer wishes to build connections with readers, one of which is the subject of the work. The incorporation of poetic aspects can lead to a more extensive self awareness. The incorporation of visual aspects also offers the possibility of providing different perspectives on experience.

The Poetic and Visual

Adrienne Rich's account of the wish to connect with others as a "dream of a common language" (Rich, 1978, p. 7), though referring to poetry, also speaks to the poetics of representation. It speaks strongly to photography. Photography and autobiography each have a story to tell. Each serves to simultaneously distance us and bring us closer to the subject of the story, even if the subject of the story is ourselves. Each constructs an account in language, whether linguistic or visual, through a creative process of composing and editing. While poetry has always been seen as creative invention, autobiography and

photography traditionally have been seen as "realistic" representations of the world. Like ethnography, autobiography serves as a constructed cultural account, though one in which "the devices, the construction scars, the brush marks are all more or less invisible, at least to the unwary eye" (Geertz, 1988, p. 29). Both poetry and photography can aptly be described as constructed cultural accounts as well. A photograph presents an image which "will 'mean' something, reflecting the photographer's intention" (Edwards, 1992, p. 12). The language of poetry and photography presents and represents the world in particular ways. Each is a fluid system of meaning, flowing within certain boundaries. Both are cultural accounts, mediums for interpreting culture. The language of both, when brought to bear on autobiography, provides richness and depth to the constructions of pluralistic selves.

Poetics in Autobiography

Just as the metaphoric dimension of poetry and the poetic can add to the understanding of culture, a poetic dimension can enrich autobiographic understandings. Poetry and poetic do not make the same claim to truthfulness as other texts such as ethnography. Poetry's truth comes from the soul, the emotions of a situation rather than external facts alone. Poetry evokes response and insight in both the writer and reader. Audre Lorde (1985) states, "it is through poetry that we give name to those ideas which are, until the poem, nameless and formless . . . (the) distillation of experience from which true poetry springs" (p. 125). Poetry goes beyond form and "wordplay" to

become "the revelation of experience" (p. 126), an intuitive process which taps the subconscious construction of experience.

The conventions of poetry do not constrain it to the actual facts of experience. The poet is free to draw on pure imagination to express ideas and evoke emotions. The speaker in a poem is not assumed to be the writer. Rather, the speaker resides in the poem, a fictitious character who may or may not be the poet. This frees the poet to speak in any voice from any perspective the imagination creates in its explorations. The contract of honesty between the poet and readers lies in the belief that the poet intends to evoke a response or convey meaning (Stein, 1975).

Poetry allows imagination and unconscious to connect with the physical world. Adrienne Rich (1993) sees in poetry a way to expose the interdependence of the world. She sees hope for a more humane world through awareness of this interdependence and awareness of similarities in the midst of difference. Drawing on the connection between metaphor and often lyrical names of animals -- Fingered Limpet, Volcano Barnacle -- Rich (1993) comments:

> Human eyes gazed at each of all these forms of life and saw resemblance in difference -- the core of metaphor, that which lies close to the core of poetry itself, the only hope for a humane civil life. The eye for likeness in the midst of contrast, the appeal to recognition, the association of thing to thing, spiritual fact with embodied form, begins here. And so begins the suggestion of multiple, many-layered, rather than singular, meanings, wherever we, in the ordinary world. (p.6)

Through the poetic language of a culture, ethnographers begin to understand the ways its members make sense of similarities and

difference. Poetry reveals different perspectives a people have on experience.

The Visual in Autobiography

While photography has long been incorporated in autobiography, it has been used primarily to record and show apparent facts rather than as a poetic expansion of the representation created. In this sense photography in autobiography resembles documentary photography. According to Edward Steichen, "to see, to record, to comment, this is the work of documentary photography: to explain man (sic) to man and each man to himself" (Stephen quoted in Running, 1985, p. xvi). The photographer creates a record of information and impressions of both the familiar and unfamiliar in the world around us and thus tell the story of their experiences in images. Of course, a documentary photographer is not automatically an autobiographer. The main field of endeavor for documentary photographers is the photography itself; they apply it to any topic imaginable. A documentary photographer designs the production – the photographs often have the appearance of art. The story may be scripted before the photographs are shot. Photographs used in autobiographical work may not incorporate the subject of the autobiography at all. Whose story is whose becomes confused.

Autobiography and photography[6] may tell stories, but these are positioned as true stories. When the autobiographer writes about an experience, it is presumed that some incident happened which the autobiographer is reporting. Similarly, a photograph is presumed to be

showing something that actually existed. Yet what constitutes the truth of an experience may not be evident in the visual facts of a photograph. What Clifford Geertz (1988) says about ethnography is equally true of documentary photography: "The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has . . . to do with their capacity to convince us that what they say is the result of their having . . . one way or another, truly 'been there' " (p.4). But underlying the trust in a photograph or an autobiography are basic assumptions about truth's connection to the physical world.

WRITING WITH LIGHT

Figure 5.4

Reflections: July 1994 - Baton Rouge

Each year I return from the west with my paintings of light. The metaphor of the camera and writing with light serves as a reminder, that experience, like photographic images, are interpretations which both can expand or limit my view. Slowly, I am defining my place, orienting myself within the intersections on the map of life, taking the journey inward by journeying out. How I see and what I see, make up and are made up of experiences, each building layer upon layer -- experience written in light. Light writing experience.

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Ph/au/tobiography

Sidone Smith (1993) coins the word ph/au/tobiography to describe the way Jo Spence's photographic autobiography "can be read as an act of autobiographical recovery" (p. 147) in the way it follows Spence's changing awareness of the way different types of photography "all put the body of the photographic subject in the picture. But that body is . . . never a transparent body. It is a specific kind of body, and it does specific kinds of ideological work in the frame" (p. 147). Autobiography approached through photography can give access (with effort) to the way one's body is constructed in connection to the identities one holds. The body and the visual and linguistic language which surrounds it, are presented as transparent against its social background. The background appears uniform, but from a particular distance and perspective the transparent image of the language of the body leaps out of the concealing patterns.

I would like to examine two aspects photography brings to autobiographical work. First, photography provides a connection to the physical world. For women, distorted as objects through the mind/body and culture/nature dichotomies, a critical examination of their relationship to the concrete physical world is important. Second, photography provides a means of creating a visual poetics. I believe visually exploring the constructions and possibilities of situations through a poetics gives wider range of vision to a woman's autobiographical work.

Photographic Connection to the Physical

The construction of meaning of place and of the body can both be effectively revealed through photography attribute of creating a visual rather than a textual representation. Reclaiming through photographic representation connections to the physical world provides space for women to better approach the myriad of visual images in which women are objectified through the physical, both of the body and of domestic spaces. The stories told through photographs carry different signifiers and draw on different interpretive skills than written texts. Combined, the two forms can produce a dense profusion narrative detail through which to view the patterns of life experience of the autobiographer.

The richness of detail and expanse of a landscape or a room can be recorded in photographs more concretely than in words. Determining one's relationship to particular places reveals both how one constructs one's own place and the place of others. As Tilley

(1994) notes, "The specificity of place is an essential element in understanding its significance. It follows that the meanings of space always involve a subjective dimension and cannot be understood apart from the symbolically constructed life worlds of social actors" (Tilley, 1994, p. 11). Understanding the subjective dimensions of a specific place, such as home, reveals its "other" also -- what we view as foreign to our way of living. Terms such as "the other side of the tracks" carry their meanings through the status placed on location and place, on class and on race.

Visual Poetics

Photographs contain a poetics which breaks with and extends beyond their mere likeness to the physical world. Film records physical objects which reflect light; but photographers create an image. Morris Wright identifies image as a creation of imagination and memory. There is a tension in photographs between the documentary aspect and the aspect of image (Wright, 1989). The poetics of a photographs lies in this area of tension.

The making of images involves the construction of fictions to a certain extent. It is in the process of making an image (as opposed to recording a likeness) that the photographer incorporates herself or himself into the photograph and writes the story of the photograph. Morris Wright (1989) observes, "there is fiction . . . implicit in the nature of image making" (p.36). Poetics, as an aspect of the affective and aesthetic communication, plays an important role in the creation of an image and viewing of a photograph.

The poetics in a photograph speak of the emotions and the psyche of the photographer. Who the photographer is finds expression in creating the image. Photographs in autobiography need not be constrained to reference to an event. Image in a photograph can be used to create meaning within and against the written text of self-representation. The picture of a mushroom (Figure 5.3), casting an obscure shadow on the forest floor, shows nothing of the conference i was attending, nor does it teli the viewer about the trail leading to a waterfall or my two companions. In fact, I did not take a picture of my companions at all that day. The photograph may say something about the techniques i employ in photography. But I want it to say more.

The events and techniques of the photograph is not important to my self-representation here. The purpose of this photograph is to illuminate the text I have joined it to. I want it to cast light and shadows across the written text. What does a mushroom on a dark forest floor say about photography - writing with light? What does the image of a mushroom, taken not as a walker sees it from above, but from side, from a prostrate position, come to mean to the reader and to myself? What is the significance of the absence of people, in fact the absence of an "event," in my photographs? These questions speak less to the chronology of important events in my life, the traditional material of autobiography, then to an aesthetics of the self-representation I am trying to achieve. Photographs, juxtaposed with written text, can create an unarticulated space into which flows the poetics of image and autobiography.

CONCLUSION

Autobiographical Recursions

I often talk about the way a woman's photographs reflect her views of community. I am again drawn back to my own photos. I take two types of pictures. One is arguably of my community -- my friends at parties or other events. But these pictures record events -- specific times and places. Even the photograph of the grave yard (Figure 5.3) is of an event. This Wisconsin graveyard was in the community of Sherman, which was my married name. At the time I felt it was a fitting representation of my marriage. I still do.

The other type of picture I take are the nature photographs. Here I record a presence -- of clouds (Figure 5.1), a buffalo (Figure 5.2), a mushroom (Figure 5.4). I am not looking to record an event in time with its implied change through time. This sense of presence is what portrait photographers attempt to create in their finished portraits. In a way, I am taking portraits of wild things. Just as portrait photographers want their portraits to have a timeless quality, I try to capture a timelessness, snagging aspect of the wild things I photograph.

This is also reveals something about my gaze. I do not often look directly at others, especially if they are aware of me. In part this is social conditioning which emphasizes effacement as a feminine trait. In addition, it serves as a defense against the gaze of others. I can not be totally objectified if I do not acknowledge the gaze of the other, especially men. I have found the masculine gaze to be acquisitive and invasive in particular.

When I was younger, I had an experience of the masculine right to invade the space of those who look at them. I was sitting in the lobby of Greenville Technical College waiting for a Clemson extension class to begin. I was staring off in space thinking and the space I was staring off into happened to be down the hallway (as opposed to the ceiling or floor). A man at the other end of the hall, convinced that i was watching him, approached, and interrupted my thinking. Until he appeared before me, I had not even noticed him. Though i told him I had not been watching him, he was not deterred. He proceeded to make small talk and to ask me out. As a woman, to even look about is tantamount to encouragement of male advances. The habit of looking away, of looking indirectly became ingrained as a defensive mechanism. Looking through the eye of the camera is a particularly powerful way of looking indirectly. The camera is an excuse for staring, invading the space of another, and also a way to appropriate the gaze for oneself.

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Visualizing autobiography represents a way to introduce a visual poetics into women's self representation. One possible method to explore this self-representation is through an exploration of the photographs women create. The interpretation of the multiple meanings beyond the literal aspects of a photograph allows for understandings which come from a different perspective than linguistic communication. Photography, acting as a non-linguistic language, can create a more expansive play of meanings,

incorporating visual aspects into the linguistic narrative of experience and thought.

It is important to remember that photography developed in the modernist frame which takes our visual perceptions as accurate -- what we see is what is there. Yet the visual world, including photographs, is inscribed and interpreted through social meanings, just as is written language. A good example of this process is the way nature and wilderness are defined and viewed. Areas considered wilderness and untouched by humans are heavily inscribed with meaning. The concept of wilderness as applied to the North American continent does not exist apart from European influences and philosophies. Traditional Native American peoples originally had no concept for wilderness. It is within European philosophies that wilderness becomes a place to be conquered as an enemy, exploited as a chattel, overpowered and violated as a woman, or protected and managed as a helpless child. Where Native Americans have these concepts now, it is as the victims of the policies grounded in these attitudes. Contrasting these metaphors are equally distorted romantic metaphors of wilderness as maternal, pure, gentle and as a place of human salvation.

The modernist influence in the construction of photographs needs to be problematized, if photographs are not to serve to reproduce the social structure rather than disrupting that structure. But the only tools available to women are tools constructed through the patriarchy. Here I am reminded of Jacobs, et al, (1995) use of palimpsest as a

metaphor for the multilayered complexity of woman's identity. "The image of the palimpsest reminds us that women participate in an androcentric culture that mutes the female perspective . . . and necessitates that women engage in a double-voiced discourse, a way of speaking that simultaneously uses and subverts dominant discursive forms" (p. 328).

In reconsidering autobiography through visual components, it is important to problematize images so that modernist constructions are not accepted at face value. In the next chapter, I explore ways to problematize the modern conceptions of self in the school through the use of visual images to bring bewilderment and wonder back into the curriculum.

NOTES

1 In Prometheus Bound (Aeschylus, trans. 1975), Prometheus states: "Humans used to foresee their own deaths. I ended that. . . . What's more, I gave them fire" (line 374 & 377). Thus humans can not see into their futures or effect how the future develops except in the short term.

2 Folk wisdom used to hold that the camera does not lie, but rather the camera records what the eye sees. This correlation between the eye and the camera is weak. Despite appearances, no color film is able to record the full range of colors the human eye sees. The film preserves a chemical interpretation of the spectrum of light. Different brand names and different films record different portions of the spectrum and eliminate or narrow others.

The camera also differs from the eye in the way film records the effect of time. For the eye, time is continuous. What the eye sees depends on the amount of light available at any given instance. Film, through the length of exposure, collects light like water in a bucket, even creating an illuminated image where the eye sees blackness. Despite its appearance of reality, the photograph remains an interpretation, created through the interaction of the photographer's imaginative eye, mechanical permutations of the camera and lens and the film's chemical properties.

3 A hogan is a traditional Navajo single room house, built of logs and plastered mud. The floor is dirt and traditionally there is an open fire in the center. Light is admitted through a large rectangle hole in the roof, which is left open (Grolier, 1995). In the hogan which I toured, a wood stove rather than an open fire was used for heating and cooking, so that, as our guide explained, the earth and sky will not be separated.

4 I want to thank Rebecca Luce-Kapler of the University of Alberta, for sharing with me her poetry based on the photography of Bourke-White. This was my first introduction to the work of Bourke-White which has become an important influence on my own work.

5 The fluid and contextual nature of culture is indicated in Clifford Geertz's development of Max Weber's idea that "man (sic) is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) from which Geertz defines cultures as "those webs and the analysis of it to be therefore an interpretive (science) in search of meaning" (p. 5).

6 For simplicity, unless otherwise specified, I will use photography to mean both ethnographic and documentary photography in the rest of the essay. The documentary photography I refer to is only that which is concerned with the photographing of people and cultures -- specifically Native Americans.

VI / The Bewildering of Curriculum Theory: Possibilities

Figure 6.1

Reflections: October, 1994 - Baton Rouge

I have stumbled across my report cards from elementary through high school -- from second grade in Myrtle Beach to tenth grade in Greenville, South Carolina. I understand more about why I am so sensitive to giving grades. First grade (in Cedar Rapids, Iowa) and eleventh grade (in Morrow, Georgia) were missing, but the rest were there. They form a dingy reminder, a record of pain, disappointment, and frustration, of bouncing from school to school, district to district, state to state. There were nine schools in eleven years. I bailed out

after eleventh grade rather than go to a tenth school. A summer spent taking American History and other missing credits earned me a diploma from Morrow High School after an undistinguished school career. But there is more to this. What is missing is the underlying life of the child i was.

When i look at all the report cards, I feel a tightening in my chest and an ache in the pit of my stomach - fear reaction. I am overwhelmed to the point of tears. is this the same fear and pain that causes me to be overly sensitive to grading my own students? I am proof of the damage that grading can do and I am hesitant to inflict that damage on my students. I have a heart felt desire to train teachers to be sensitive to the needs of children -- not just their long term needs but their immediate needs for a sense of self-worth and recognition. Children need teachers they can trust not to harm them. This recognition of the need for teachers, including myself, to be more than transmitters of information has grown out of my own experience with the school system.

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INTRODUCTION

Curriculum Maps

As noted in chapter one, an archaic meaning of the word "map" is "to bewilder" (OED, 1989, p. 350) -- a meaning not normally associated with curriculum. The scientific and mechanistic approaches to curriculum has long worked to map out knowledge for students and teachers alike, but in the sense of "to represent or delineate" (p. 349)

or "to plan out . . . to divide up . . . into sections allotted to different occupations" (p. 349). The labyrinth of complex and interrelated experiences of others, whether mathematicians, historians, scientists or philosophers, are broken into freestanding packets of information, erasing any connection between a "fact" and its history, rendering invisible the context of how something came to be seen as fact.

Facts are not the only thing removed from context in school. Students and teachers are also decontextualized in the structure of school. The daily lived experiences of teachers and students are not valued in school structure. They are to be left at the front door, to be reclaimed at the end of the day. In a mechanistic process of education, the teachers are treated as assembly line workers and the students as inanimate by-products in the factory of school. Material is presented, consumed and then reproduced on tests. Emotions have no place in this objective rational world. In the educational process, teachers (who are, after all, former students of the system) and students both are fragmented, repressing the psyche's and the body's subjective, emotional experience in the name of objectivity, causing the ability to generate new knowledge, create and dream to atrophy (Pinar, 1975).

It is often in schools that children first enter the social arena. Particular gendered constructions of identity are delineated along with the subject areas taught (Walkerdine, 1990). Certain differences, such as non-heterosexual orientation, are rendered invisible, while other differences, such as race or gender, are reinforced. In the process,

the dynamic tensions of identity and the construction of the social world are slowly closed off until teachers and students are no longer able to see the possibilities of different perspectives. Describing a small private college where she studied, Natalie Goldberg (1993) provides an insight into the life of public schools: "There was always the threat that it (Naropa college) could fold. . . . This was good. Only something alive can die. The public schools go on year after year. They don't die because they are not alive" (p. 84). Perhaps, through an reintroduction of the chaotic and bewildering tensions of the lives and identities of teachers and students, schools can be made to breath again.

There is risk in allowing bewilderment to enter schools. The illusion of control -- of students, of teachers, of content, of the future -- will have to be relinquished. Loss of control is a powerful threat to the structure of schools. For instance, schools attempt to control uniform gender construction based in heterosexuality. But if teachers and students have the freedom to question gender constructions, the vast complex world of gender performance and sexual orientation will become evident. An awareness of choices is an act of subversion against the school's socializing control which threatens to disrupt dominant cultural norms. The creators of curriculum materials, school boards, parents, and outside interests have specific agendas to be carried out in schools. These groups attempt to remove any possibility of bewilderment from education.

Bewilderment need not be seen as a dangerous or uncomfortable state of affairs. Bewilderment, to bewilder, can lead to

a state of wonderment, curiosity, and the realization that our perspectives are constructed in a social process, and other perspectives are also possible. Bewilderment can ultimately serve as the catalyst for investigation and learning, the catalyst for us, as students and teachers, to risk together the creation of our own maps .

THE IMAGE AS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Figure 6.2

Reflections: November 1993 - Baton Rouge

An insight I gained by reflecting on the autobiography was into the way I presented time. The most glaring of these tactics was the ordering of events. I rearranged the order of certain events so the connections between them is obscured. When I arranged the stories, I placed events out of chronological order. I spoke of my marriage before either my spiritual experiences or my period of deep

depression. Yet this obscures the relationship of the three periods. The spiritual experience came just as I was making an escape by quitting my job, selling my belongings and beginning a proposed trip around the country with a three months stay in the rolling foothills of Virginia. This escape was from a serious depression brought on by different factors in my job and life. The trip in turn flowed a few months later into another deep depression. The trip and the periods of depression are not two stories, but one. One of the things I recognized was that part of the problem was that people of the church had strict oppressive criteria for the roles of women. I tried to force myself to be what they wanted. This denial of self contributed a great deal to my depression. I dealt with it by leaving the situation. It was in this very vulnerable and confused state that I met and fell in love with my husband, Lynn.

When I re-read the autobiography, i do not have complete understanding of why i rearranged the events. One reason is it obscured the effects of my depression on my relationship with my husband. By obscuring this obvious connection, I fed my self-defeating behavior, by allowing me to feel shame and bitterness about my behavior, instead of viewing it compassionately as the choices made by a woman in pain. This struggle with denial of myself is an on going fight.

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The Myth of the Subject

One means of constructing multiple perspectives of the autoblographical subject, is to do so literally, through the incorporation

of visual components in autobiographical work. Educators and others (Middleton, 1993; Walkerdine, 1990; Spence, 1986; Paley, 1995) have explored through photography and illustrations or drawings, "the important, though sometimes overlooked, role of 'visual memory' both in autobiographical memory and in the conceptions of self-identity it embodies" (Jay, 1994, p.191). Approaches to autobiographical work which focus exclusively on written texts place limits on the types of understanding which can be reached. Jay (1994) explains that the "visual memory, the 'reading' of images from the past -- be they fixed in a photograph or fluid in the mind's eye -- can often be integral to the construction of identity in autobiographical works" (p. 191). While often the mind's eye of memory distorts the past or constructs memory in ways we want to remember, even these alterations can be informative to understanding identity construction. Exploring visual memory provides an avenue to see the different aspects of identity more clearly and to understand how we construct ourselves.

This is not a simple relationship between memory and autobiography. The constitution of identity is a process in which we are influenced by social constructions which form our roles and identities as much as we form our own identities which then fill those roles, at times in ways which we do not acknowledge. The construction of an autobiography can say as much about the life of a person as the requirements of the conventions of autobiography. Comparing autobiography's reference to its author/subject directly to the subject of a photograph, Paul de Man (1979) comments:

> But are we so certain that autobiography depends on reference, as a photograph depends on its subject or a (realistic) picture on its model? We assume that life *produces* the autobiography as an act produces its consequences, but can we not suggest with equal justification, that the autobiographical project may itself produce and determine the life and that whatever the writer *does* is in fact governed by the technical demands of self-portraiture and thus determined, in all its aspects, by the resources of his medium? (p. 920, emphasis in original).

Exploring the relationships among autobiographical work, identity production and social contingency is provocative as these relationships produce the uneasy realization that the modernist construction of an autonomous subject is a myth. The character of subjectivity, with its agency to construct objects without being objectified itself, is problematic in the way it assumes a unified subjectivity operating within a dichotomous separation between subjects and objects. Drawing on Foucault, the constitution of the self and social discourses which create docile bodies reveal that any subject in particular situations may be objectified as a docile body (Foucault, 1978, 1977c)[1]. Power is diffuse and subjectivity is not uniformly invested in particular persons. The modernist construction of the subject with absolute agency, or the unified self is a myth.

The Subject of Photography

As a masculine form focusing on the important (i.e. public) works of an individual, autobiographical work, especially if based only in written text, can prove limiting for a woman. The introduction of visual aspects can help expose and explore the ambiguity of the constructions of women as they operate in the contemporary world.

Photography, through its appearance of reality, provides a resource of memory as well as allowing distancing from the activity shown in the photograph. A photograph is a record of our gaze, at least our gaze at one particular moment. As such, it provides access, as a written text does not, to our taken-for-granted valuing of the visual world where objects become signs in a visual language. But as an object, a photograph is inseparable from its subject, there is not one without the other. This attribute, through which it objectifies its subject, is its connection to other objects:

> The Photograph[2] belongs to that class of laminated objects whose two leaves cannot be separated without destroying them both. . . . This fatality (no photograph without *something* or *someone*) involves Photography in the vast disorder of objects -- of all the objects in the world: why choose (why photograph) this object, this moment, rather than some other? (Barthes, 1981, p. 6, emphasis in original)

The decisions involved in making photographs are complex. Examining how the subject is chosen (or rejected), how the photograph is framed, exposed, and printed, and what the photographer considers valuable to photograph, provide insight into how the photographer views the world. This insight can serve as a basis for constructing different views of photographs, of subjects normally rejected, of techniques not normally used. In addition, photography by a woman, and the photographs she produces allows for explorations of her positioning as an object through the act of creating photographic objects.

Other Languages

William Pinar (1988) uses the word "midwife" to describe the process of autobiography. It is an apt word. When I worked on my autobiography, I found the process to be an act of birthing and midwifeing to create new understanding out of myself. It was the gathering of much of my history, like genetic strands, to be woven together to form new meaning out of the swirling chaos of my past. Why did I want to go through that struggle? In the end, I wrote it because I felt it was time to look back across the landscape of my life to see if I could map out the route I had chosen to move into the present i occupy now.

The process of creating and writing my story provided the distance necessary for perspective on the events of my life. I began to see the significance of the collapse of my marriage and its place among a number of crises during that period of my life. The forces which caused me to flee my alienating job to return to academe came into focus, not only as personal stresses and struggles, but also as effects of cultural expectations and norms in my life. I began to experiment with other strategies in autobiography, especially poetry and photography, to break out of my rigid views of what it means to be a woman and an educator. Conventional patriarchal language was inadequate to the task. The experimentation with photography and poetry expanded into a search for a language to more broadly represent what it means to be a woman as a way to subvert the definitions of male and female which support patriarchal systems.

Sidone Smith notes that as the female autobiographer "experiments with alternative languages of the self . . . she testifies to the collapse of the myth . . . a unitary self. Having untied her relationship to the conventions of the autobiographical contract from the ideas of an . . . individualistic, central self, she de-centers all centers and . . . subverts the patriarchal order" (Smith, 1987, p. 59). In challenging the dichotomies which surround gendered and sexualized roles, women bring the feminine, what ever that may be, to bear on patriarchal social order. Once spoken, the words may easily be lost, as women's voices have been lost through out history. But for that speaker at least change has begun and slowly that change begins to insinuate itself into the patriarchal systems.

The Imaged Body

Photography provides women an avenue to explore the body, not as an object of another's gaze, but of their own gaze. Of all edicts controlling women, those surrounding sexuality and privacy are perhaps the most difficult to overcome. The female body has been fetishized and appropriated through the male gaze. For a woman to look at her own body, especially in photographs, raises issues of proprietorship of a woman's body.

How a woman represents herself through gender and sexuality is rife with hidden meaning. Photographs can provide images of the performative nature of sexuality and gender, a construction which, for the adventuresome, can be challenged by cross-dressing. Shannon Bell (1991) discusses the construction of masculine and feminine

identities through appearance and gesture as revealed through female to male cross-dressing. Her research centers on New York performance artist Diane Torre's workshop exploring gender construction. The seminar for women, called "Drag-King-for-a-Day," culminates in the participants taking an excursion in pubiic as men.

The workshop grew out of Torre's experimentation with cross-dressing. The differences in both Torre's own attitudes and the responses of others to her heterosexual masculine gender behavior reveals the level of social and seif-construction which operates in a patriarchai society. The effect of changes in appearances, made through clothes and makeup, as well as in body language and gesture was dramatic. People treated her with more respect than she normally received. She felt more powerful and was able to act more assertively than usual. Visiting a friend in the hospital as "Danny" Torre, s/he "was able to get answers from the doctor that her female friend couldn't, just by virtue of the fact that she was a man" (Bell, 1991, p. 97). Photographs taken of workshop participants in drag reveal how the women present themselves to the camera differently when dressed as men than when dressed as women. The photographs allows the women to see their own gender performance, and so begin to confront their appearances and behaviors which limit them .

Spence (1986), provides a striking example of the use of photography to explore the body in a photo-essay entitled "The Picture of Health" in which she explores her experience with the medical establishment through out her treatment for breast cancer.

Rather than becoming an anonymous body-object of the medical personnel, she recorded all aspects of her treatment photographically, from mammograms to surgery, as well as the strategies she used to reclaim her body through traditional Chinese medical practices. Spence then used the photographs to explore the construction of identity through the body, raising questions of who owns one's body, and how is meaning conveyed through the body and disease in the body. These are questions which are important for women. Breast cancer is epidemic in the United States. The silicone implants which women were sold for both cosmetic and reconstructive surgery reinforced the link between fetishized organs, in this case the breast, and their value as women. In patriarchal systems women's destiny may be determined by the biology of reproduction, but the heterosexual male gaze constructs her identity as a woman through the appearance. Her breasts are an over-determined component in that identity. Spence shows how images of the body can be used to deconstruct this relationship among appearance, ownership (of one's own body), and value.

The relationship of appearance, ownership, and value extends beyond politics of the body to the politics of place. Photographs allow distancing through both time and space. Multiple perspectives shown through multiple images, which can allow the relationship of the politics of the body and place to be brought forward. The physical world of the body and the place it occupies can be rethought through constructing different texts, as Jo Spence has done. Rather than

remaining the tool of patriarchal gaze, photographs can be appropriated to construct or reconstruct the feminine gaze.

The Female Gaze

Visualizing autobiography can allow a woman to explore a female gaze in different ways. Through the construction of her photographs, a woman can see in part what she desires, values, or avoids. Photography can provide a concrete experience and record of a woman's gaze – what is looked at and what is effaced, how the eyes of others are met. Photographs also can reveal how the patriarchal order has constructed her relationship to the world. The difficulty of women appropriating the gaze is evident in photographs of themselves. Woman do not normally look directly or openly at the camera (Walkerdine, 1990; Spence, 1986) but rather turn slightly away and avert their eyes. Working with a camera opens a space for examining this relationship with the (masculine) gaze and possibilities for changing the woman's attitude toward those who gaze at her.

In subverting the male gaze and constructing a female gaze, a woman challenges her positioning as feminine. Part of a woman's repositioning may require an examination of how her gaze affects others. One reason women are taught to efface their gaze is that to avert one's gaze is a sign of submission in this culture. The gaze acts as a challenge to space of others. Efrat Tseëlon (1995) notes that "direct gaze is a form of invasion" (p.67). To invade another's space falls outside the parameters of the nurturing, non-assertive female. It is this sense of invasion, which is a cultural construction of masculinity, that

women can explore both as its object and its possible agents. Subversion of the male gaze may not mean appropriation of that gaze, which constructs otherness in a hierarchy of dominance of "self" over "other". Rather, a female gaze may be more relational, inclusive and non-invasive. As Jo Spence (1986) developed photo-therapy for "re-inventing and remapping aspects of childhood"(p. 198), she found it necessary to work with a female therapist rather than a male therapist. Working with a female therapist who acted as photographer of Spence's re-enactment of childhood memories, Spence (1986) found, "A benign female gaze was what we both needed to re-experience" (p. 198). in the process of re-formulating memories and self-representation, it became necessary to experience a benign gaze, in Spence's case, the actual gaze of another woman.

The gaze, as represented by the lens of the camera, is masculinist -- invasive, acquisitive, colonizing. In reappropriating photography to her own uses, a woman also alters the masculinist gaze of the camera. It is not that women have an essentially different gaze than men, but rather they are conditioned to see differently. There may be many factors involved in this conditioning, such as the way society has generally conditioned women to focus attention on appearance, or the way women are conditioned to approach the world more relationally than men, or women's conditioning to overt their eyes from the gaze of men. Each affects a woman's perspective, both figuratively and literally. The way a woman has internalized social conditioning will cause her gaze to differ from the masculine gaze.

Pictures a woman takes of her community can show how she views others through the eye of the camera. Through purposeful creation of photographs which depict a woman's view of community and individualism, she can explore how she sees her own community and the people most close to her. Community for women is especially fluid because she is often expected to leave the community of her birth to enter other groups, such as the community of her husband's family. She may join other communities by decision or default, such as a lesbian or religious community. Analysis of her photographs, (or even her lack of photographs), of these communities can illuminate how she represents her position in different group.

I attempt another strategy to subvert the power of the gaze in photography. Rather than using photographs to show particular events and people, I explore self-representation through a poetic use of the images of wildlife photographs. Dislocating the connection of the photographic subject from actual events chronicled in autobiographical writing also dislocates the objectification of the photographic subject. As autobiographer, I do not claim possession of the photographic subject. Rather the photographic image becomes the possessed object. Each photograph in this dissertation has been juxtaposed against text which does not refer to the subject of the photograph. I attempt to broaden the available interpretations of autobiographical writing by introducing a non-synchronous image which represents some aspect of the section of text in which the photograph is located. Rarely is there a direct connection between

the photograph and text. It is left to the viewer, including myself, to imagine and create connections and meanings.

Photographic Meanings

As an autobiographic tool, photography can function to reveal the ways we construct reality. In Figure 6.2 above, the photograph shows several big Horn Sheep ewes rushing headlong across a hillside in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. The image represents to me nature at its purist. No signs of humans are visible, the landscape appears untouched and the sheep appear to be truly wild. This is how I choose to represent nature to myself and others. I find the movement of the animals dramatic and aesthetically pleasing. But render invisible the control and interference of humans in the lives of the sheep. I believe this accurately reflects my own refusal to acknowledge outside control in my life. The photograph is constructed along conventional lines, and I seek to capture what I think of as the presence of the sheep in the wild. In this sense, the photograph serves as a representation of my conception of the essence of wilderness as sublime. This photograph constructs a world without the messiness and unpredictability of human relationships.

While a legitimate representation of what i saw that day, the photograph does not show the entire situation. Below, Figure 6.3 shows two other photographs which provide different views of the sheep. These photographs reveal the extent to which humans control and interact with the lives of these sheep. They are not free animals, but rather are managed for their own safety and the safety of the public.

A B

Figure 6.3

Park visitors, myself included, behave as if these animals were present solely for public visual consumption[3]. The park seems to view the animals as objects of research, contributions to national heritage, and a curiosity for tourists. Currently, aninals are primarily seen as objects of research with tourists managed to cause as little interference with the animals as possible.

A question I often return to is why I crop people, especially other on-lookers, from my photographs. My discomfort with including people in my photographs forefronts my defensive mechanisms which deny the importance of others in my life. I see myself as a loner, distant and, at times, without friends. It has taken several years to allow myself to acknowledge that I am surrounded by a caring community of women. I continue to struggle with the realization that I belong in this community, and that others value me in ways I do not fully understand. I believe I construct my world view in this negative way in order to protect myself from the disappointment and frustration which can result from losing close relationships. A childhood and adulthood of

leaving people behind in moves has built up this defensive reaction. Yet like the sheep in the photograph, in reality I am deeply effected by those around me. This influence extends beyond the positive affects of community. Others often have an influence or control of aspects of my life in ways with which I am not comfortable. Yet for a woman in a patriarchal system, this is the common state affairs.

VISUALIZING CURRICULUM THEORY

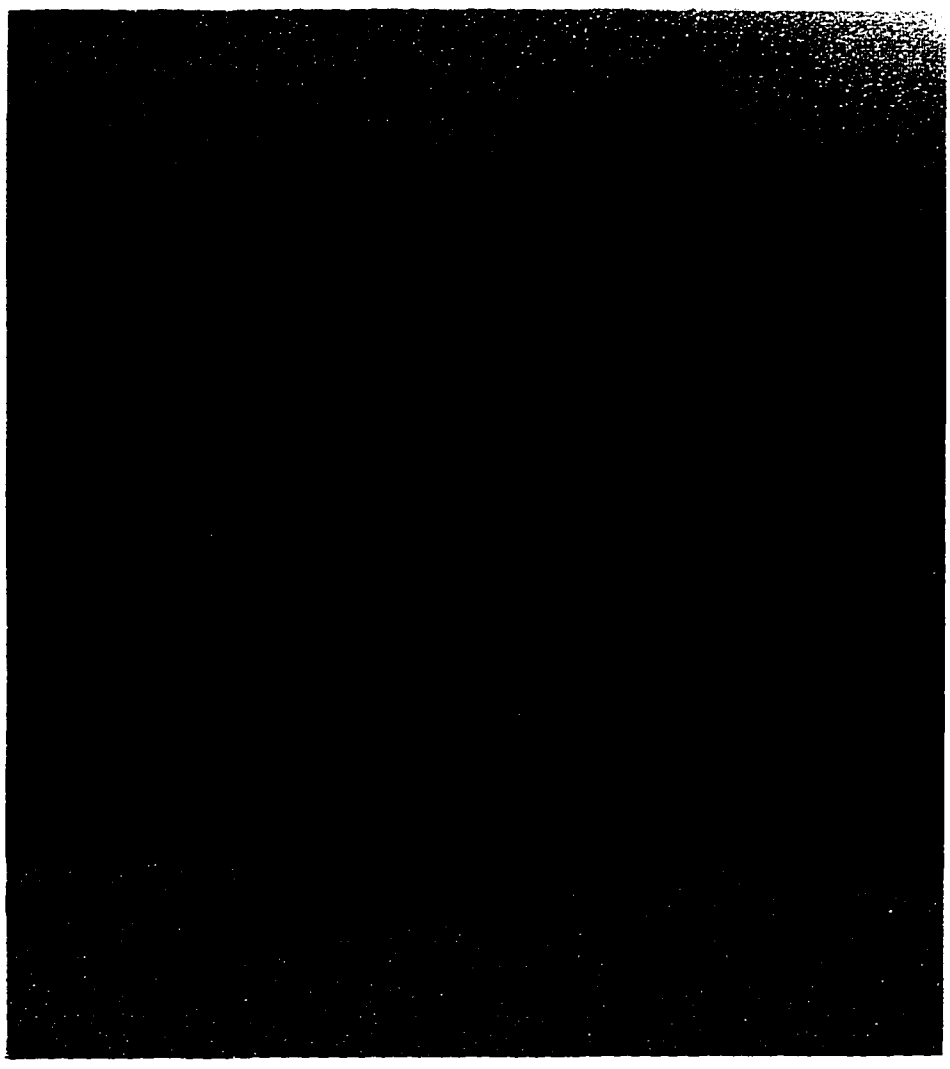

Figure 6.4

Reflections: November, 1993 - Baton Rouge

Through the spring of 1993, as I wrote my autobiography, memories and stories overflowed. But it did not start out that way. Much of my memory of early childhood is repressed, for what ever reasons. I eventually used three sources to help trigger memories - diaries, photographs I had taken, and school report cards. The most productive source was the old diaries spoken in my voice. Transcribing these different books, each with only a few days, weeks or months of information, provided me with snippets of memories of what I went through, and they served as the cataiyst for other memories, until the stories started to flow. The photographs had the same affect, augmenting the diaries and triggering memories in their own right. As I do autobiographical work, i am beginning to examine how this powerful tool fits into education. The whoie autobiographical project has had a transformative effect on both my personai and academic life.

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Agendas of the Self

it is necessary to first understand our history if we are to understand the history of others. This is a process and function of curriculum. The autobiographic process serves this endeavor by raising history from a nebulous morass by offering, as William Pinar says, "opportunities to return to our own situations, our 'rough edges,' to reconstruct our . . . agendas" (Pinar, 1988, p. 148). This struggle brings into focus our concerns, and through intuitive expioration, brings the

socially created world into the forefront. Bringing photography to bear on the issues which surround us can be powerful in curriculum theory. Photography could expand the process of coming into relation with one's self, a process which Pinar (1988) describes: "One falls back on oneself -- rather than upon the words of others -- and one must articulate what is yet unspoken" (p. 148). Photography provides a means to this process. The creation of new life, new meaning in ourselves is the ultimate expression of curriculum in society.

Teacher Education

One need in teacher education is helping young teachers become aware of their blind spots and prejudices. I believe photographic autobiographic work can aid in this by making visible the ways students' construct their world views. Photographic projects in which they explore what it means to be a teacher or student are obvious beginnings. But work on what types of communities they find aesthetic, who in their daily lives they count as friends and acquaintances, what makes them feel secure and what makes them feel threatened all can reveal aspects of sexist, heterosexist, racist and classist attitudes. Small group exploration of photo-essays, combined with written reflections, on different themes could serve as a catalyst for discussion of sensitive topics and oppressive attitudes. Visualizing autobiography can expose both the darker and brighter sides of a world view.

increasingly a variety of strategies and genres are being used to express and understand identity. From literature to science, fiction is

being used to provide a deeper appreciation of the construction of self and culture. The inclusion of visual imagery, such as photography, is an important strategy in the understanding of identity. What Miles Richardson (1990) says of shifting perspectives in ethnography also applies to using photography to shift perspectives in autobiography:

> shifting the narrative point of view from that of the . . . observer who resides off the page in omniscient splendor to that of a participant who copes within the text in a condition of uncertainty . . . creates an immediacy that gives life to an entombed prose. (p. 1)

This creation of immediacy extends into autobiography. The use of photography in autobiography provides a deeper expression of the individual through the development of personal imagery and metaphor. This may serves as an imaginative vision for expressing parts of the self which otherwise remains hidden. Interpretation of this imagery can bring richer understanding of society's construction of maps through the individual's imagination. Through the individual's imagination, cultural and curriculum maps may be redrawn.

Bewildered Maps

Some of the maps which need to be redrawn are those of gender, race, and class which form the current framework in which cultural criticism is working. As complex as the ground of gender, race and class is, the terrain which needs to be remapped is more complex. The range of aspects found in the self/other dichotomy is vast. Health, disease, and disability mark the body in particular ways. The construction of age feeds into gender and sexuality issues of who can have sex, when, and with whom. Issues of intelligence intersect with

race as the majority European-American culture compares itself against Native-American, African-American, Asian-American, and other communities in different ways. Ethnicity and nationalism compound all of these.

Autobiographical curriculum theory has a long history of problematizing cultural issues. Visualizing autobiography can contribute to this work at different levels. Exploring social constructions through self-representation and reflection can allow teachers to become aware of the limitations of particular constructions of gender, class and race. An awareness of one's situations and the results of those situations. When I looked through my old report cards, I gained insight into my grading practices. They also open some of the memories of my life as an air-force brat. While privileged in some ways, the effects of the repeated moves showed in how I related to school and my teachers, and the ways I always felt like an outsider. Reflective writing on my problems with grading revealed some of the ways I deal with the old wounds of grades. Playing with photographs to create an image of the effects of grading ended with the choice of a photograph of the interior of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky (Figure 6.1). A wide, almost smooth path, alluding to the ease of endeavor, leads down into the bowels of the earth.

How can this photograph help me to understand curriculum and teaching better? First, the photograph reveals some attitudes about school and grades. An obvious connection between the cave and my report cards is the sense of a dark, enclosed pathway leading

downward to the sense of despair the report cards evoke for me. In the photograph, the path curves around to an unseen end. Though the path is wide, the presence of surrounding rock constrains the viewer, just as it constrains the visitor to the cave. Like wise, mediocre grades, though few in number over the years, combined to constrain my belief in my academic abilities -- not because I could not learn, but because I came to believe I could not do difficult academic work. In high school, I made high grades in courses which involved creative writing. Not surprisingly, these are the courses I loved. I made low marks in science and math. Out side of school, I enjoyed science and nature, but in school I made consistently low grades. In the end, I abandoned dreams of being a scientist because I believed the work was too hard for me succeed.

This beliefs that academic subjects may be to difficult to learn reflects what Walkerdine (1990) and the Sadkers (1994) found in the education of girls. When girls have difficulty with a subject, teachers often attribute the difficulty to a lack talent for the subject, as if it were a genetic disposition. This leads to the beliefs reflected in the statement "Oh, I'm just not a math person." When boys have difficulty with the same subjects, teachers often attribute it to the boys not working hard enough. Perseverance can overcome the difficulty for boys, but girls are domed by their lack of a pregiven talent, another connection back to biology as destiny.

These connections and ideas, while not apparently related to the photograph of Mammoth Cave (Figure 6.1) were spawned from

reflecting on the photograph and what it means for myself as a student and as a teacher. The ideas about the constructions of destiny and perseverance in the education of children did not occur when the photograph or the journal about the grades was written. Only when I began to think about how the image related to the journal did the association occur.

The combinations of the text and photograph provide a deeper insight than the either give alone. Together the photograph and text bring out the complexity of my own schooling and how that schooling has come to affect my students. It reminds me of an observation Jacobs, et al, (1995) make about the need to continually reread women's lives:

> Because we recognize that life itself is a text . . . riddled with inconsistencies, ambiguities, and contradictions, the double voicedness of the telling suggests how we might re-read women's lives as an ongoing political struggle that disrupts masculine perspectives of the unitary subject and resists the linearity of patriarchal discursive forms. (Jacobs, et al, 1995, p. 341)

Just as photography can enliven autobiography, it can reveal the tensions in life history research. Photographs open spaces for forming connections between teachers' stories and the life of the pre-service teacher. This broadening of the texts and maps available to the life history subject and researcher allows both to understand how the world constructs, and is constructed by them. Photographs linked to texts may reveal ways to draw new maps, ways to bewilder the curriculum and curriculum theory.

Figure 6.5

Journal: 3:00 a.m., November 2 - 3, 1996 - Stillwater, Oklahoma

I am working in chapter six, bringing to a close, at least for now, this dissertation. I feel sad. This is the end of an era in my life. So many things have changed across the years of this journey. It is my journey, alone. But I am not alone on the journey. Molly, Jeff, Steve, Doug, and I all are in similar places writing our dissertations in some area of curriculum theory. Many other students follow just behind us. Many of those around us have been down this path - not the least, our committee members and teaching colleagues. They know from their own experiences and the experiences of their students over the years what it is I am going through. I am now at Oklahoma State University struggling across the threshold from student to professor. Foucault

sleeps curled on the corner of the table where I write. (I have not had a cat for years, but on my last day in Baton Rouge I acquired her.) She keeps me company as I write late in the night, long after the dog has gone to bed.

My struggles with identity, gender, sexuality construction and my place in the academic world have not been resolved through the writing. Nor could they be. That is neither the purpose of the dissertation or of autobiography. But I have gained a deeper understanding of myself in the world. The writing has raised as many questions as it has answered. I am interested in the possible relationship between the function of confession in autobiography which Leigh Gilmore (1994) discusses and the operation of photography. Is the visual image a type of confession about the subject? I am also fascinated In the difference in the photographs of Buchenwald Concentration camp taken on the same day in April 1945 by Lee Miller (Pultz, 1995, p. 102) and Margaret Bourke-White (Silverman, 1983 , p. 162). The difference in the photographs seems to express a gendered difference in gaze which I want to further investigate. But I find I must delay these investigations until later.

It has come time to let go of this dissertation, to let go of Baton Rouge. The finishing of the dissertation is the finishing of a volume in my life, perhaps the most important volume. I came to LSU to study with Bill Pinar and I found a nurturing place; a community of students and professors with whom I grew to feel at home. My professors were willing to wait patiently for me to find my own way. At times that way

was very dark but the friendships which lasted and strengthened through that period will last for the rest of my life.

But the time has come to leave that space -- the live oaks and magnolias, Bill Pinar's insistence that I walk my own path and his patience while I stumbled through the underbrush of my life to find it; Bill Doll's crowded office conversations full of wisdom and humor; Petra Munro's quick, powerful insights and unflagging encouragement as I challenged the ways I think about myself as a woman; Miles Richardson's quiet fascination with human activities where even court house squares speak in a poetic voice. All these professors, and many others have profoundly influenced my life. My life changed in this place. But it is time to come for closure, as un-postmodern as that is. Already, i can never occupy that space again. i know this. i have left to many places, to many times, to think otherwise. But I also know the other side of leaving, the reuniting in different spaces and time, as different people under the ancient Live Oak trees.

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NOTES

1 That the subject is also constructed as masculine in made apparent in Jay's (1994) expression of the fears raised by the threat of losing autonomy and authenticity of an essential self, fears which, "are linked specifically to the possibility that authenticity -- defined as the self's freedom from being constituted as an object -- is illusionary" (p.195). These fears operate at both a conscious and unconscious level. This fear of the loss of self as autonomous is expressed as "horror at the concept of self, or identity, stripped of its . . . foundations in some immaterial essence or spirit, and of its autonomy as "subject" in the grammatical sense of the word -- that which acts as opposed to that which is acted upon" (Jay, 1994, p. 195). This is also the definition of passivity, one of the chief imposed characteristics of a woman.

Women have to deal with the contradictions holding the status of object in the eyes of society while trying to constitute themselves as subjects. As men have come to realize that this contradiction may also apply to them the ambiguity has become a threat.

2 in his search for the essence of photography, Barthes (1981) uses Photograph, with a capital 'P' to designate a universal aspect of all photographs, as opposed to a particular photograph.

3 According to park ranges at the salt lick overlook, where these pictures were taken, at the time this road in Rocky Mountain National Park was built, the major focus of the National Park Service was to entertain the public. Conservation of habitat and maintenance of wilderness were not the main goal of the Park Service in the late 1800's when this park was formed.

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May 6, 1996

Ms. Anne Pautz
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
228 Peabody Hall
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

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Vita

Anne Elizabeth Pautz received a Bachelor of Science degree from Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, in 1977. Upon graduation, she taught Graphic Arts at Union County Vocational High School. She then pursued a career in the printing industry in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. In 1990 she began her graduate study. She received a Master of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin - Stout in 1992. She then attended Louisiana State University to study for a Doctor of Philosophy degree in the College of Education. She received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction in 1997, with a minor in Anthropology.

While at the University of Wisconsin - Stout she studied with Dr. William Reynolds who introduced her to curriculum theory. She came to Louisiana State University to study curriculum theory with Dr. Willlam Pinar of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

While at Louisiana State University, she taught several courses in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. She also acted as coordinator for the elementary teacher education program block methods classes.

Her dissertation was completed under the direction of Dr. William Pinar and Dr. Petra Munro, with Dr. Miles Richardson acting as advisor for her minor in Anthropology. Further guidance was provided by Dr. William E. Doll, Jr. and Dr. Charles Tedlie. The dissertation is concerned with the uses of photography as an alternative method of autobiography to examine gender and self-representation of women.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Anne Elizabeth Pautz

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Title of Dissertation: Visualizing Autobiography: Intersections of Gender, Representation, Curriculum Theory

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

November 18, 1996